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EVENING



WRITTEN BY J. E. CHALMERS. ILLUSTRATED BY A. WALLIS MILLS

"'Twas brillig, and the slithey toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe."

"Alice in Wonderland."

CHAPTER I.

THE Jabberwock " was moored off Hampton Court, within sound of the rushing waters of the weir. In appearance she was more gaudy than artistic, the green of her was too vivid, and the gilding too heavy, while Japanese fans, yellow, red and green dragons, and coloured mosquito curtains added to the general effect; the floral decorations were chiefly scarlet.

If "The Jabberwock" was too gay, "The Madonna Lily" presented a striking dissimilarity of taste in her owner. Cool and white, with short window blinds of sea-green silk, and pale pink geraniums, blending a harmony of colour with mignonette and heliotrope, she was a thing of beauty and an object of envy to many. Her mooring was next to "The Jabberwock," and the dogs had a barking acquaintance.

Mrs. James' somewhat unwieldy form

was moving to and fro on the deck of "The Jabberwock," as, with watering-can in hand, she doused the scarlet geraniums and drowned the blue lobelias. Her daughter was lounging in a hammock, swung in the well below.

"Hetty," called Mrs. James, and she pronounced the "h" softly. "Do you know *She's* gone?"

A pause before the answer came up.

"Are you quite sure, mother? How do you know?"

"Two large canvas trunks and her dressing bag were put ashore this morning. She caught the ten o'clock express up. There's no mistake," Mrs. James added, reassuringly.

"She has left Pepper," suggested Hetty.

"But she's taken Dot, that means a fortnight at least. Thank our stars! for of all the stuck up hussies, she ——"

"Oh! be careful, mother, somebody is sure to hear you discussing your neighbour in those free and easy terms."

"I don't care who hears me," maintained Mrs. James, stoutly. "She gives herself the airs and graces of a duchess, and she is only plain 'Mrs.' after all. Her daughter is going to be just such another minx. Captain B—— must be a poor stick to put up with his women folk."

"I don't suppose he sees them in the light we do," laughed Hetty, and she showed her pretty, white teeth. "Has he gone away also?"

"Yes, but he'll come back soon to Pepper."

And both women laughed.

Mrs. James began to descend the spiral ladder, cautiously lifting her skirts high at the back, her lips twitched nervously, she was afraid of a fall.

"Sit down and rest, mother, after your exertions," said Hetty, with a naughty twinkle in her eye.

"You ought to be thankful that you

are not as stout as I am," Mrs. James exclaimed, severely.

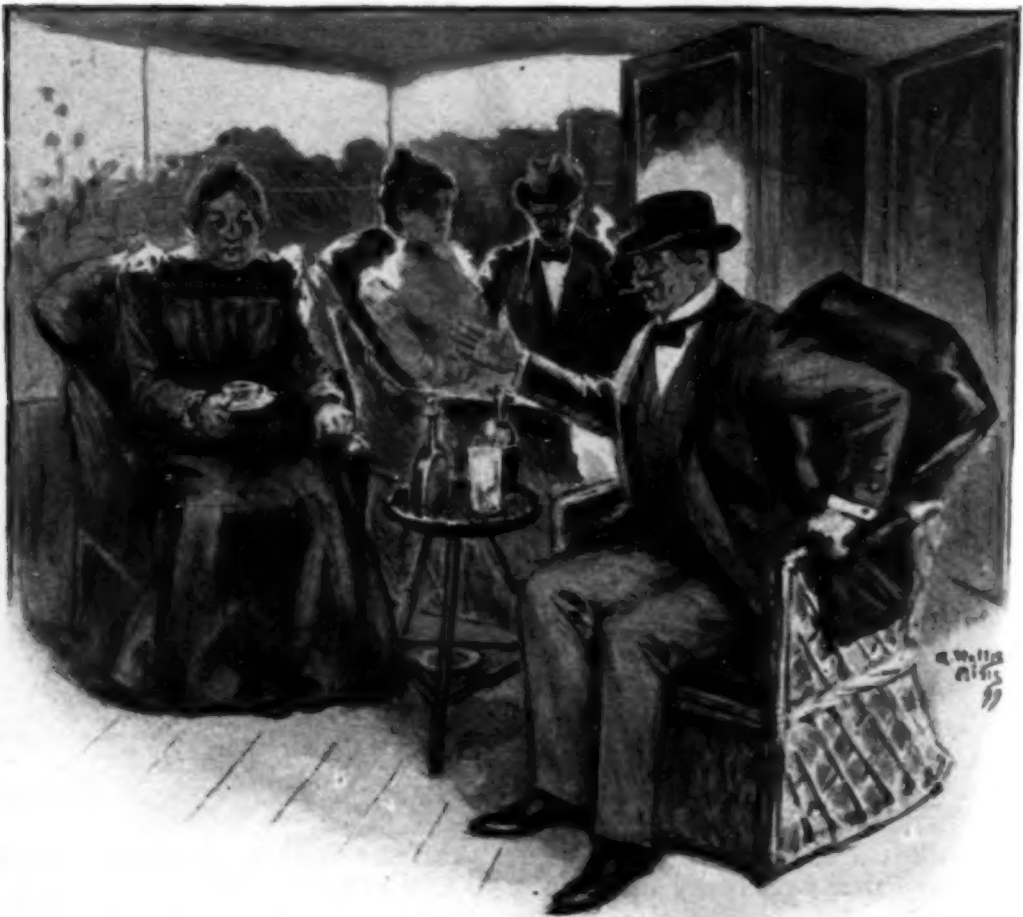
"Oh, mother, at eighteen! It would be an undeserved affliction." She rolled out of the hammock as she spoke, and stood before her mother, a slim, tall, graceful figure, in white serge suit.

Mrs. James gazed at her with a becoming motherly pride. In spite of her saucy speeches, she was charmingly pretty, red-haired, and piquante; at present she did not suggest a second edition of Mrs. James.

"I wonder who 'Uncle Mo' will bring down with him to-morrow afternoon, to enliven the week end."

"Hetty, really you shouldn't call Mr. Sales 'Uncle Mo'! It is too flippant."

"Well, I won't—to his face," she promised. Then, after a pause, "I hope it will be something young this time, most of his friends belong to the fossil



"ONLY A GNAT, AND I BELIEVE I MISSED HIM AFTER ALL"

tribe, and old men are perfectly horrid."

"They are far more indulgent than young men," observed her mother.

"Ah! That is the bait with which they set their nets; but it won't catch me."

Mrs. James laughed good-naturedly.

"You are a high-spirited girl, just the same as I was at your age. Take my advice, and don't fall in love with a youngster who may break your heart." She nodded her head with an air of mystery.

"Mammy dear, you are quite the most heart-whole woman in the world. I shall follow your lead."

Mrs. James was not a shrewd observer, and her daughter's temperament had never caused her anxiety. Yet there was dormant passion underlying the girl's pretty frivolity; and her yellow-brown eyes, and chestnut hair, surely revealed a hasty and uncertain temper. At a crisis she would be bound to act upon impulse.

* * * * *

Algernon Maule, who accompanied Mr. Sales the next day, was three-and-twenty, young enough to find favour in Hetty's sight. He was tall, lithe, and muscular, with fine eyes, aquiline features, and a big contrary dimple in his square chin.

Hetty sat very quietly after dinner, watching him, something after the fashion of a cat with a mouse. White dusk stole along the river banks. Amethyst and topaz faded from the sky, the stars came out to worship the moon.

There was a merry twinkle in Mr. Sales' eyes, as, meditatively, he smoked his cigar. He was thinking what a good thing it would be if Hetty were to take it into her frivolous head to marry, and leave Mrs. James free to—. Algy was badly in need of money, too, and there would be a good dowry with Hetty. An excellent idea! He slapped his knee. "Eh, what?" exclaimed he, in view of the others' astonished faces; "Only a gnat, and I believe I missed him after all."

CHAPTER II.

"Well, what do you think of her?"

Sales inquired suddenly of his companion, as they rowed across in the dinghy to meet the ladies coming from church.

"She's fresh," Algernon replied uncertainly.

"Of course, something faded and haggard, savouring of the smart world, appeals to your fancy."

The younger man dipped his oars leisurely; he was living back six months. Sales leaned towards him, dropping his hearty voice to a confidential whisper:

"Properly launched, Miss James would take society by storm; and she would fetch a top price in the marriage market."

Algernon's eyes expressed a question.

Sales replied: "As it is, she is prepared to give a tall price."

"H'm, very likely," acquiesced the other; but he made a hasty comparison mentally between Mrs. James and the well-bred, beautiful woman whom he called mother.

The elder man was regarding him eagerly. Algernon met his glance with frank blue eyes, colouring slightly as he replied: "I know I am considerably in your debt, Sales; but I shall find some better means of settling up than the way you suggest."

The appearance of the two ladies on the bank of the river now closed the subject. Hetty looked charming in white mousseline de soie, and a black chip Gainsborough hat set on her burnished red-gold hair. She was sufficiently dainty to bear comparison with any one Algernon thought; and he felt the wild blood of youth running riot in his veins.

Hetty possessed many graces, and adorable tricks of humour. Algernon tried to express some of the admiration he felt for her, while they lounged side by side through the lazy afternoon.

"I am like a fascinating poodle, who sits up and beats the drum, or a monkey that swings and chatters and tears everything to pieces—is that what you think?" laughed the mischievous girl.

"No, no," he denied with indignant warmth; "you are just yourself, and different from anybody I have met."

"You don't know me."

"I shall never know you; I begin to fear that already. You are so full of unexpected depths and shallows. A man might be entangled in the meshes of that wonderful red hair of yours, or drowned in tears from your liquid eyes, as the poets would say. You have the queerest eyes I have ever seen."

She made a grimace. "Queer!—I don't like that."

"But they are queer," he persisted; "a mixture of yellow and brown and red, with a speck of blue in one."

"Oh, spare me! I could never stand details."

"You pay attention to them nevertheless." And he glanced slyly at her pretty foot, thrust well forward, in its perfectly fitting Louis Quinze shoe.

"Why don't you add that I am vain?"

"Because it doesn't occur to me, and I hate adopting other people's suggestions." His glance wandered towards the saloon, where Sales sat playing dominoes with their good-natured hostess. An uneasy recollection disturbed him, and he paid Hetty no more compliments.

As he had ceased to be interesting, Hetty turned to play with her sleepy dachshund; their antics caused Pepper to rush out on the gangway of "The Madonna Lily," barking furiously.

"Stop that noise, you little dev—, why, Pepper, is it you, old chap?"

Thus encouraged, Pepper half leaped, half swam across the intervening space, landing upon Algernon's spotless ducks.

"When did you make the acquaintance of that little beast?" cried Hetty, with scornfully-pointed finger at the now bristling terrier.

"Pepper and I are old pals. I suppose that must be the Beresfords' house-boat."

"Do you know the Beresfords?"

"Ra—ther!"

"O you tiresome young man!—and I was just beginning to like you, too!"

"Go on liking me, I will try to deserve it."

"I should never like a friend of the Beresfords," Hetty declared, drawing herself up with a tragic air.

"I didn't say I was exactly a friend of theirs," he observed, cautiously.

"But you are. I knew when you recognised Pepper. Ugh! The little brute!"

Algernon broke into loud laughter. Then, as still she remained serious, he caught her hand, and held it firmly, while he said in his most persuasive tone:

"Really? You must forgive me this time, and let us forget the Beresfords."

"But I can't," was the reply.

CHAPTER III.

Two weeks of perfect river weather had gone by, and Algernon had almost succeeded in making Hetty forget her grievance about the Beresfords. He had been successful in another matter also; perhaps more so than he desired.

Hetty stood on the gangway of "The Jaberwock," and watched for his coming. Sales had arrived alone the night before. The plaintive tinkling of a church bell, sounding somewhere from the opposite bank, reminded river folk, not unpleasantly, of the Sabbath, while its summons passed unheeded. The sky shewed turquoise through a golden haze, which heralded the blazing sun. The girl's head was uncovered, and her hair, now dully red, now shining as with copper flame. Her eyes looked out in misty expectation, for her lover was late.

As Algernon's boat turned the bend of the river, he saw Hetty on the gangway; and he waved his straw hat to her. Five seconds later he was holding her hand, and he saw a shadow of trouble in her eyes.

"What is it?" he questioned.

"They are back. I—I—suppose you are awfully glad," she stammered, avoiding his glance.

She had drawn her hand away from him, and he stood clasping his chin instead.

"The girl is there too, and she has put up her hair. She looks more like her mother now than ever."

Then he spoke:

"Bother the Beresfords! Why should you care?"

"Because I know that it is going to make all the difference to you and me," she flashed out.



"SHE STOOD, WATCHING"

"But why?" he persisted.

She was brutally frank.

"You belong to them—we are, what you call parvenus."

"Don't be so absurd," he exclaimed, sharply; because she looked so pretty, and the truth was unpalatable just then.

Hetty broke into a laugh, running into the saloon, where, presently, he heard her trilling like a bird. Sales called him up on deck, and the talk was heavy as the sultry weather for the next hour. Hetty made herself scarce until luncheon time; then she appeared lively as a cricket. She was an undependable feminine creature.

Afterwards the whole party sat in the well; and Algernon exchanged distant bows with the Beresford party, while the dogs lifted up their voices.

"Little dev—ils," Hetty breathed low.

Sales laughed in lazy enjoyment, and woful ignorance of the tragi-comedy being played out under his nose.

Violet Beresford was lovely, nearly as lovely as her mother, who was a society beauty still. She had turned up her flaxen hair, and her skirts trailed about her feet. Algy could not help looking at her, trying to realise the fact that she was grown up.

"Of course you admire her tremendously." It was Hetty who spoke low in his ear. "Everybody will admire her tremendously by-and-bye. She will be presented. Bah! That is nothing. Ma and I could be presented at the next Drawing Room, if we chose; for Americans and people from the bush can go anywhere. But that Beresford girl is going to have a lovely time, I know, and I just hate her!"

"That is very naughty of you," laughed Algernon, amused at her vehemence. "I believe you are pretending half the time."

But Hetty shook her head.

"It's every bit real," she said.

* * *

Two days later, Algernon met the Beresfords in the Park. They stopped short in front of him, and Mrs. Beresford held out her hand with her most honeyed smile. He thought Violet studied him with contempt; but she was so pretty that he forgave her for

that, and when they moved on, he strolled beside them.

"We are back in Curzon Street," Mrs. Beresford informed him. "You know we had let our house for the season; but the tenants were not desirable, and somehow my agents contrived very cleverly to get rid of them for us. We shall never let again. It makes me shiver to think of those vulgar people in my sweet house, among my Lares and Penates. I can smell patchouli in my drawing room, and peppermint in my boudoir."

Algernon smiled, and Violet's great eyes flashed stormily.

"Mother dear," she said, "I am sure Mr. Maule cannot understand your objections."

"Little cat!" Algernon mentally apostrophised her, for he understood her meaning. But she had a fascinating dimple, which she brought into constant play; and the men who passed by regarded him enviously, as he walked by her side.

"Have you given up your house boat?" he inquired, and the question was followed by a significant pause.

"No-o. My husband insists upon having her moored at Hampton Court, most unfortunately for us. The people one meets down there are most extraordinary. I expect we shall go down again at the end of the week," said Mrs. Beresford.

"She is a ripping boat."

"Ye-es."

"Your dogs seem to have a good time down there. Old Pepper looks first-rate."

Here Mrs. Beresford stopped to speak to an elderly lady, being wheeled in a bath chair, and Violet walked on with Algernon.

"Mother is quite right about the people down at Hampton Court. I am so sorry you know some of those awful people."

"Which awful people?" he asked weakly.

"Oh, the Jabberwocks, of course. They set my teeth on edge. How long have you known them?"

"Not very long," he replied.

"Do you know that I liked you ever so much when we met you at Nice last

year; and when I saw you so friendly with the Jabberwocks I was disgusted."

Her face was adorable under her shady hat, and Algernon's too susceptible heart began to hammer against his breast.

"Don't be too hard upon a chap, Miss Beresford, you know the girl is awfully pretty and amusing, and they are great friends of Sales', who introduced me, and asked me to be civil to them."

"Oh, I see," and Violet pursed her mouth. "I don't admire Miss Jabberwock, she may be a man's beauty."

"And despised of women," laughed Algy.

"I don't see the point," Violet returned, scornfully. "I suppose you are trying to be funny."

"Call me an egregious ass, Miss Beresford. I must be, to risk your displeasure."

Her full blue eyes met his, and the expression he read there might have turned a more seasoned head than his own.

"When we were at Nice," she said slowly, "you used to call me Violet."

On the following Sunday Algy called at Mrs. Beresford's house in Curzon Street, and he spent the best part of the afternoon talking nonsense to Violet, while Hetty sat disconsolate on the deck of "The Jabberwock," and watched for his coming.

On Tuesday Algy dined at Curzon Street, and afterwards went to a theatre with his hostess and her daughter. His new flirtation had not begun to pall when, a few days later, on receipt of a telegram from Mrs. James, he found himself at Waterloo, en route for Hampton Court. A river party, consisting of half a dozen men and one solitary woman, was in full swing on the "Jabberwock"; and subsequently he discovered that it was given in honour of Hetty's birthday. She looked more brilliant than ever, and Algy was piqued to find that she had not missed him at all. A big cavalry officer from Hounslow was trying to make the running with her; and in due course Algernon discovered that the pearl drops she was wearing in her pretty ears had been his gift.

He drew Hetty aside.

"When did you meet that chap?" he asked, with a gloomy air.

"Do you mean Captain Brown?" she returned innocently. "Oh, he is quite a new acquaintance."

"Rather a rapid one."

"Which suits me ex—actly," drawled Hetty, in her most irritating manner.

"Do you wish to make me jealous?"

Her hand made a flattering movement towards his, but he did not see it, and she drew back hastily.

"Of course I am awfully jealous," he continued, laughing.

Her white face flashed into his for a moment; there was a wild light of misery in her eyes.

"My God! You can joke like that!" she cried.

He thought she was acting.

"Tragedy on a house-boat," he exclaimed. "I can see you are not difficult to please. Lightly come, lightly go with you."

"I hate quarrelling," declared Hetty, wearily, "and at least, you have no right to be nasty to me about Captain Brown. I believe you have been flirting with that Beresford girl."

"Yes, I have."

She started up in her seat, with flashing eyes:

"You cannot really mean it, tell me you did not mean it."

"Well, supposing I tell you that," said he, wondering at her rapid change of mood.

"I would be satisfied. But if it were true, I might feel tempted to throw myself into the river."

He looked at her steadily.

"In that case, we should both get a wetting," he observed, quietly.

Hetty left her seat, and leaned over the railing of the deck. Algernon followed her mechanically. In the dusk of the evening, by the pale light of the moon and the stars, her face showed white, and clear cut as a cameo.

"There are some water lilies down by the weir, where the weeds grow thick," Hetty spoke in a dreaming voice. "When I am quite certain that you are tired of me, I shall try to get those lilies."

Tinkle-tank, tinkle-tank, struck up a

banjo accompaniment to a rollicking baritone voice.

"Hoo-poo," he sang, "come, come, my love,

Come, fly with me away."

"Hoo-poo," she answered him again,

"I'm with you all the day-ay."

Hetty broke into a laugh, and began to dance a few steps of a new skirt dance, which she had picked up among other accomplishments.

Algernon watched her quick, graceful movements in puzzled silence. She was a curious, emotional creature, he thought; but her moods caught, and held him entranced.

Against his better judgment, Algernon had promised to go down with the Beresfords to luncheon on their house boat. Violet would take no refusal from him, and he was pliable as wax in her hands, so did her bidding.

It was a dull, grey day, and Algernon was in sympathy with the weather. As he rowed across in the Beresfords' dinghy, he perceived that Hetty was on the deck of "The Jabberwock." She saw him also, and laughed, and waved her hand to him; presently she was running round the deck like a mad thing, with the dogs in pursuit of her. A sick qualm of misgiving seized upon Algernon, but Violet was studying him out of the corners of her eyes, and he endeavoured to appear cheerful, knowing that he was on trial. Between Violet's youth and Hetty's irresponsible frivolity he stood in an awkward predicament.

Luncheon over, he suggested taking Mrs. Beresford and Violet for a row; but they were deterred by sight of the lowering skies, so they all sat in the well of the boat, within a stone's throw of the gaudy "Jabberwock."

"'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves did gyre and gimble in the wabe," murmured Algy.

"What nonsense is that?" inquired Violet, sharply.

"The nonsense of a clever man," he replied. "I forget his name."

"Lewis Carroll, is it not?" interposed Mrs. Beresford.

"I believe you are right." But he

was evidently surprised at the extent of her knowledge.

"One is apt to be reminded of his writings—here," continued Mrs. Beresford, and she glanced swiftly towards the opposite house boat. "They are really amusing, and that is a sorry travesty."

"Have I read them, mother?"

Mrs. Beresford smiled. "When you were so high," she replied, indicating four feet from the ground.

"Then I am sure I shouldn't care about them now," Violet declared, with an air of being grown up.

Her stiltedness always amused Algy, and it seemed more real than Hetty's comedy and tragedy.

A few heavy rain drops pattered down.

"How lucky it is that we didn't venture out," remarked Mrs. Beresford, in self-congratulatory tones.

"The 'Jabberwock' girl must be mad," Violet exclaimed, as she leaned forward to obtain a better view of her opposite neighbour. "Just look at her now, in that white silk dress, going for a row. She won't take the dogs, poor creatures, as if a shower was likely to hurt them."

Hetty had jumped into the skiff alongside, vigorously waving back the dogs who were anxious to force their companionship upon her. For one brief second her eyes met Algernon's, and he saw a reckless devil in them. Then the light skiff, propelled by her oars, shot down the purling stream.

"'Etty, 'Etty," loudly called Mrs. James, from her saloon window, "don't you go far; there's an awful storm coming up."

But Hetty only threw back her head, and laughed.

Her soft, mischievous face, with its gleaming, white teeth, struck Algernon with a sense of danger. He leaned over the side to watch her movements.

"Weeds have drowned more people than water," observed Violet, sententiously. "Look at that silly girl, trying to reach those water lilies, close to the weir, too. Now she has lost an oar!"

Algernon leaped into the nearest boat, while beads of anguish stood on his brow.

"Don't go, you may be drowned too, and she is not worth it," cried Violet, stretching her hands towards him. A muttered curse was all the reply he gave her, between his clenched teeth.

"When I am quite, quite certain that you are tired of me I shall try and get those lilies"

she had said, in that maddening, sweet voice of hers. Great God! and he had let her think that, when his heart was bursting with love and regret.

"Hetty—Hetty——" his voice rang out like Gabriel's trumpet.

The girl heard him, even at that distance; she swerved suddenly round in the boat, and the next moment the skiff was floating bottom upwards, and the white figure gone under, near the spot where the dock leaves and water lilies grew among the rank weeds of the back-water. Twice Algy saw her head

rise, and the muscles of his arm swelled and cracked with the herculean efforts he made to reach her. The third time he had caught her, thank God! But the ghastly face, with its closed eyes, seemed to mock at him, as he held it above water. Another boat had been put out to the rescue; and with the combined efforts of its occupants, Hetty's still, lifeless body was disentangled from the embrace of the weeds, and taken back to the house boat.

Oh, little woman, is this to be the ending of your summer's day?

"Hetty, do you know me?"

"Yes, I know you."

"Are you better?"

She shook her head, weakly.

"I was nearly done for. Why did you force me back to life? It would have been so easy then to slip away."



"HETTY, DO YOU KNOW ME?"

Algy looked down upon her in bewilderment.

"A girl like you ought not to talk like that," he said. Then a sudden thought struck him. "Hetty," and he came nearer to where she lay, and bending over her, his breath fanned her cheek: "Did you really do it on purpose?"

There was the dawn of a smile in her eyes.

"Did it look like an accident?" she asked, in a queer, suppressed voice.

Algy could not account for the sob which rose in his throat; he slipped down, on his knees by the bed, and

buried his face in the white linen sheets. Hetty spoke again, querulously:

"What is all this fuss about? You have got your way, and I am going to live, and be a nuisance to every one."

"What a fool, what a brute I have been," exclaimed Algernon, while his lips devoured her small, fragile hand. "But if you'll forgive me, darling, I swear you shall never repent it."

Hetty raised herself on the pillows, her red hair, unbound, shewed her face weirdly.

"Do you mean it?" she inquired, with breathless eagerness.





A City of Sevens

WRITTEN BY K. F. PURDON. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS

CAUSE or effect, which is it in Rostock? What is the connection, or is there any, between the sevens for which the old Hansetown is famous and the luck it has had during its seven centuries or so of existence? Did the old City Fathers of those far-off days hope to coerce Fate into the bestowal of good gifts—at least, to propitiate her into smiles—when they so ordered things as to justify the Platt-Deutsch rhyme of the fourteenth century, which, roughly translated, runs thus?—

Seven doors there are to Mary's Church ;
Seven streets to the market, if you search ;
Seven merchants' bridges to the strand ;
Seven turrets upon the Rathhaus stand ;

Seven bells ring joyous every day ;
Seven lindens in Rose-garden gay ;
Seven gateways lead beyond our wall ;
These be old Rostock's signs to all.

However it may have been, whether they really had the good fortune their sevens would indicate, there is unquestionably an air of calm, unruffled prosperity about the Rostockers of to-day. They move about their roughly-paved, irregular streets, and past their old-world houses, as contentedly and imperturbably as the sluggish Warnow that flows so slowly by. Unhurried by any declivity—there is none to speak of in North Germany—it empties itself peacefully, a few miles farther on, into the tideless Baltic.

But first it shows cause for the name

of the town, which, of Slavonic origin, signifies the sudden broadening of a narrow stream. This the Warnow does, and very remarkably. Above the town it is little more than a wide canal, flowing peacefully through a fertile land of flat meadows, and windmills, and red-roofed farm-houses, nestling among fir trees or poplars. Just where the town stands it turns suddenly west, and then due north again, and, extending to a breadth of close on a mile, offers a stretch of water admirably sheltered and suited for trade. Here, accordingly, is the harbour, on which the prosperity of Rostock so largely depends. What piles of timber are there—what stores of sugar and grain—what a pavement of herring-barrels the quays display! awaiting shipment to Norway or England, or some other of the many countries that trade to the Baltic.

The town itself presents a curious medley of old and new. Side by side with an up-to-date factory, or school, or a smart hotel, one finds, still standing and still inhabited, the quaintest imaginable specimens of gabled dwelling-houses as they actually existed in the

Middle Ages, with their high, steep roofs, their rows of lattice windows, their wonderful outer decorations of carved figures and richly-coloured glazed tiles, testifying to the pride of the ancient burghers in their beautiful homes, as well as to the true art of their day.

There is a fine University, founded in 1400, though the present handsome pile is not more than thirty years old. It is another "seventh son" of Rostock, for it holds that rank, in point of age, among German Universities. And here again the modern and antique are jostling one another, for close by there stands the Kloster vom Heiligen Kreuz, once a monastic institution, now a kind of almshouse for ancient maidens. Several similar establishments exist in Mecklenburg, and their origin is sufficiently peculiar to be worth mention. They are generally old monasteries which, having been confiscated after the Reformation, were presented by the Grand Duke of the day, to the State, as a set-off against services rendered—a somewhat thrifty salve to the Grand ducal conscience, one reflects!



THEATRE, ROSTOCK

This Kloster consists, first, of several tiny old houses overgrown with creepers—red roofs and all. Further on, through an archway, one peeps into a cloister enclosing a square of turf. Off this tiny arcade are the rooms inhabited by the lonely old ladies. Outside each door stands a highly-polished chest or wardrobe, often of an antique beauty to make the mouth of a London curio-seeker to water with a longing for possession. A forlorn little visiting card nailed to the door-post tells of some honourable Fräulein von — who is living out her allotted span in the shelter of the old Kloster. For many of these

Rostock is rich in churches. At least five of those from which we may suppose the seven bells "rang joyous every day" are still standing, and all date back to the twelfth or thirteenth century. Of these, the chief in point of size is the Marien Kirche of the seven doors—an enormous Gothic Cathedral, more noticeable outwardly for its colossal proportions than for its beauty. The interior, however, is finely proportioned, and it contains many interesting evidences of old-world religious art and feeling. Its great size hardly tells outside, owing to its being shouldered away, so to speak, by other buildings, in



RATHHAUS

Stifts are very exclusive, and some will only admit ladies who can show a descent of six noble generations on each side.

In one corner of the cloister is a huge dilapidated picture, representing a scene in the life of Queen Margaret of Denmark, who founded this monastery when Mecklenburg was under Danish sway. And the beautiful church belonging to it, now being restored, bears an inscription to the effect that in 1270 "was this Kloster to God's honour dedicated, by Margaret, Queen of Denmark."

a corner of the Neuen Markt. Within, one has a curiously dwarfed sensation beneath the immense and lofty roof.

The Nicolai Kirche, dedicated to the saint of sailors and fishermen, offers wonderful treasures of ancient relics; and the high altar is a masterpiece of the art of the day, brilliant in red, and blue, and gold.

More remarkable than either is the Petri-Kirche, with its singularly graceful and slender spire, reaching a height of 414 feet. The country around Ros-

tock is so level that this tower can be seen from a great distance, and has served to guide many a bewildered seaman miles of stormy sea away. With the Petri-Kirche must always be associated the memory of the great reformer Slüter, who preached there till its precincts were forbidden to him. Then he preached outside, under the trees; died there, too, in the midst of an address to his followers, poisoned by a servant at the instigation of the Roman Catholic priests.

The "Rose-garden gay" exists now in name only; the seven lindens have disappeared. But they are worthily represented by the trees, and grassy slopes and lovely flowers of the Rosen-garten of to-day, where, with a true sense of fitness, worthy of imitation by more pretentious cities, Rostock has chosen to place her theatre. It stands in an open space, with no building near to take from the effect of its size and beauty; and these, according to our ideas, are quite out of proportion to the city. But Germans are ahead of other nations in many things—in nothing more than in their attitude towards the stage, in which they recognise a powerful aid to education. In every town of any pretensions in the Fatherland a theatre is to be found, well managed, and with prices and hours arranged to suit the needs of children as well as their elders.

Of all Rostock's sevens, only the turrets upon the Rathhaus present the full number; and how many things that old Town Hall has suffered from the Philistines! how many restorations it has undergone, since, in 1265, the City Fathers began to meet within its walls! Rostockers of to-day regard it somewhat sadly, as a monument to the depraved taste that failed to appreciate ancient art. They know better now; but it is too late. Every mark of anti-

quity, save the turrets, has been swept away under various "improvements," leaving only a very ordinary building, in front of which, on market day, a busy throng of country-folk assembles to buy and sell their wares.

They have probably driven in from the country, in their long four-wheeled waggon, through the three gateways, which are all that remain intact of the original seven. Of these three, the Kröpliner Thor is, perhaps, the most characteristic, seen mirrored in a deep circular pool, the Teufel's Kuhle, close by—probably the last vestige of the city moat. And here, again, modern taste and antiquity are side by side. The grim solidity of the old gateways is emphasised by the



KRÖPLINER THOR

beauty of the parks and gardens now surrounding them. The fortification once enclosing the city has been levelled, and its site occupied by leafy pleasure and gay parterre. Prominently placed among them is a monument to the Rostock soldiers who fell in the Franco-Prussian war. A cannon, marked with a huge "N" stands idly on either side, their gaping mouths veiled by long films that wave and glitter across them in the still, hazy September afternoon. Children are playing, blue lilies are blooming, around these relics of a fallen Empire.

Peaceful as Rostock looks now, a glance at history shows that she has had her share in the storm and stress through which the Fatherland passed before attaining its present position. Many a vicissitude she has suffered since being destroyed by Waldemar of Denmark, in 1160. A striking proof of the vitality and energy of her people appears from their sending representatives, less than a century later, to the meeting of the Hanseatic League at Lübeck; and in 1311 a marvellous tournament took place in the Rose-garden of the seven lindens. Rostock suffered much from

the Vitalianer and other pirates, who harassed all the peaceful ports along those coasts.

During the Thirty Years' War, in 1628, she swore allegiance to Wallenstein, who had been invested by the Emperor, as a reward for his great services, with both Duchies of Mecklenburg. The following year he held Rostock during a blockade by Gustavus Adolphus. But her greatest claim to participation in martial glory lies in the fact that Blücher was born there, December 16th, 1742. The house is still standing, No. 17, Blücherstrasse, in which the great "Marshal Vorwärts" first saw the light. A statue to his honour has a prominent position in front of the University. Erect and grim, the old hero stands, the typical lion's head showing amid the drapery folded above his faithful heart. He is, perhaps, the greatest of Rostock's sons; yet, only one of many heroes who have made good her right to the praise bestowed on her in the old verse—

Thou hast held, O town of seven towers,
Firm grasped in Mecklenburger hand,
True sword to guard, when tempest lowers,
Above the long, low Baltic strand.



OBERWARREN

THE END OF SUMMER

LET us forget to-day that Summer dies :
There is no death writ in yon sunny skies.
Only the reaper and the falling grain
Tell of a changing in earth's harmonies.
Let us go forth, remeasuring the ways
Wherein we walked those tender August days,—
By wood, by water, and by purple plain,
Breathing the warm scent of the noontide haze.

And let us lie and hear the streamlet sing,
The cricket harp his solitary string,
The mellow booming of the prosperous bee,
The breeze among the branches murmuring.
Ah, sweet is sleep! but not so sweet as this :
Sleep never soothed my soul to peace, I wis,
As these soft sounds and scents that seem to me
Wed to make sweetness as is kiss to kiss.

Here is the place wherein my love was nursed,
Wherein I hoped the best and feared the worst,
Seeing my heart's oasis in a dream,
And waking to the pain of desert's thirst.
Oft has the day gone out and left me here,
Save for my sorrow, comradeless; and near
The night has drawn before mine eyes could deem
The darkness aught save my own doubt and fear.

Yea, worshipped I long days before I wooed,
And, sleepless, sighed long nights before I sued
For love; and told each halting hour your name,
With all the meanings of a lover's mood.
Sometimes my life grew sick for want of cheer
And weak with watching for the mists to clear;
And once I cried, "Let Hope depart in shame!" . . .
Ah! could Hope go before he called you "dear"?

Yonder, where high hills curve to form a cup,
Rimmed ruggedly, and rudely rising up

To touch the mouth of heaven,—once at eve
We tracked the stream, and saw the red deer sup;
And rested there awhile, and came again
Across the heather and the pulsing plain.

And when, at last, you asked why did I grieve,
I could not speak the word I knew was vain.

Alas, that all God's lights save one were mine!
Flowers, sun, and stars, and something more divine

Were in your eyes: kindness and tenderness
And girlish grave solicitude were thine.

But love was lacking, and you did not know,
And, knowing not, cared not that it was so;

And, ignorant, your pure heart sought to bless
Mine with a soft word crueller than a blow.

* * * * *

So I, who rest to-day before your feet,
Content to watch you, glad to call you sweet,

Wonder and wonder how it came to pass
That Love and You and I at last did meet.

For it is all so grand, so good, so new!

I ask my heart a thousand times "Is't true?" . . .

Awhile ago a life that sighed "Alas!"—
To-day, a life that laughs for pride in you.

The end of Summer? Well, I have a flower
That jests with Autumn, and in perfect power

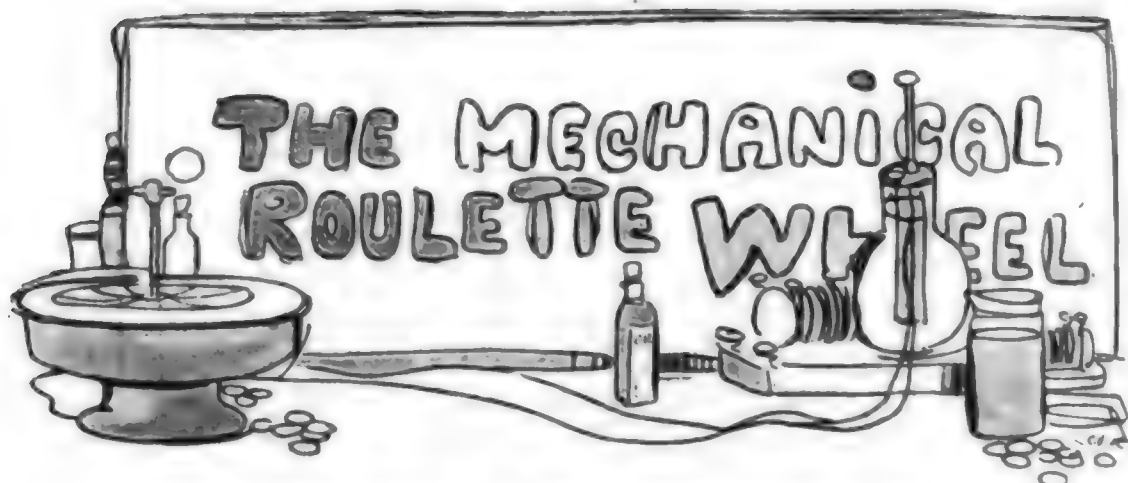
Exults in Winter's face, and greets the Spring,
As one whose age is scarce a little hour.

The end of Summer? Oh, my love, my love!

What if the green must quit the field and grove?

The snow shall smile, the very rain shall sing,
And this clear joy shall gild the grey above!

J. J. BELL.



BY REGINALD BACCHUS AND RANGER GULL

ILLUSTRATED BY Y. A. D. LLUELLYN

THE two men in Room 390 on the tenth floor were not happy. It was an hour since their talk had ended in a weak tempest of invective, and the situation remained as uncompromisingly blank as ever. Also, there were exactly seven cents in the common purse, the whisky stood at zero in the bottle, and the mercury in the thermometer bid fair to knock a hole through the top of the tube. It was, by the testimony of the daily papers, "one of the hottest summers that have ever visited this city."

Men worked in their shirt-sleeves throughout the fourteen floors of Michigan House, and the two occupants of 390, Floor 10, stood in a like comfortable negligé at separate windows of their office. To sit waiting in the dingy room was unbearable; and the visible presence of the outside world brought at times a more cheerful companion to the thoughts that held sinister parliament within them. Far below, through the thin mist that out-ran the evening, the city of Chicago rolled northwards in octagonal blocks to where the sudden blue of the lake took on the prospect to a silvered streak of horizon.

The windows were set high in the monster building, so high that, save directly underneath, where the men and the cars mingled like tiny black dots and cubes under the microscope, the streets were only visible as narrow channels traced among the roof-tops.

A busy hum came up from the town, a hum aggravatingly suggestive of the ceaseless making of money—money that the two men in the room could by no means obtain.

It was the grizzled old man with the tired curve in his shoulders who broke the silence.

"I kin see," he said, and his voice came dryly from the back of his throat, "houses fur miles and miles, in which houses, sonny mine, air thousands of folk with no call ter blaspheme agin the Almighty."

He turned from the window, and a rippling wave of humour drove some of the creases of despair from his weary face as he looked towards his companion.

It was five long minutes, while the city purred outside and the elevators jangled incessantly past the doorway, before the young man faced inwards to the room.

"Oh, can you see," he snarled; "well, my gifted old sightseer, it would be a sight more to the point if you could cock your eyeball on some one—James Norrie for choice—coming quick with money for the spinnin' of my little wheel. Look again, old man, and good luck to your eyesight." He walked towards the table, two yards of thick bone and good muscle, with a queer light in the blue eyes, a light that had made men leave the poker table, and once a woman catch her bonnet by the strings

in the very article of throwing it over the mill.

His father—for they were father and son, Curtiuses of decent stock from Maine—jerked the gum into his other cheek, and, settling it with a thrust of the thumb, answered sharply:

"Darn your wheel, and you too, you great long loon; how long am I to waste bad names on you? Stick to your

Englishman from home, and at intervals he cast a look of apology over the patent Americanism of his clothes.

"Yes, it is Norrie," he said; "Norrie whose visits are so few and far between, if not I fear, so attractive as angels' visits; but this time"—he struck an alarmingly theatrical attitude—"I come to save the State."

Stepping forward, he whipped a black



"A BUSY HUM CAME UP FROM THE TOWN"

mechanics, I say, and leave the worldly wisdom racket to your old father. Hullo! visitors for Curtius and Co. By the Lord! it is Norrie."

The door had flung suddenly open to admit a young man of an exceedingly proper appearance. He was English, with the flamboyant insularity of the

bag from behind him with the flourish of a conjuror, and banged it down among the littered papers on the table.

"I am very glad to hear it," said Mr. Heber Curtius the elder, "the State wants it; and Joan, I reckon Joan'll be along soon?"

John Curtius laughed harshly.

"Joan is well?" he drawled, and his lips curled sneeringly over the words.

The little man flushed, and his *aplomb* died from him.

"I am glad to say, gentlemen, that the incident of Joan is at an end. I come on the best of business. Look at these, gentlemen, and these." He fumbled in his bag, and jerked notes in little packets on to the table.

Two months ago James Norrie had drifted across the path of the Curtiuses, and, fired by the schemes of the adventurers, which certainly were, in the language of John Curtius, "colossal," had been big with promise of capital. Then distraction, in the shape of Joan, a wisp of a brown-eyed girl, with shapely legs that flung skywards a shade higher than those of her companions of the Eldorado Quartette, had intervened; so that the Curtiuses sat moodily apart, living on the unsatisfactory food of hope as doled out by the errant Norrie at irregular intervals.

The sight of the unlooked for money wiped the care from the men's faces, as the sponge cleans a slate; neither spoke, but both watched intently the fountain of greenbacks that spouted from the bag. His task ended, the little man looked up with a smile.

"Money to make the wheel go round, eh, John?" he queried.

"That's so,"—John Curtius' voice shook with excitement—"by gum, that's so; this day a very few weeks, Mr. Norrie, a tenth floor single-room office don't show the door-plate of Curtius, Norrie and Co."

"Then," shouted the old man, his back straightening with a jerk, "in the face of my words, my most insultin' words, you two air loony enough to believe you kin bluff a roulette swindle like John's yonder in the face of the American public." He jerked out his sentence with an emphasis that culminated with a scream of consonants in the penultimate word. "Sonny, there'd be shootin' round that table inside an hour's gamblin'. I don't hold with it, Mr. Norrie, and I was playin' draw poker before you were born. Thirty-five years' experience, sir, gives a man leave to talk big about gamblin'."

"Oh! stuff an' nonsense." It was not

hard to know, as he spoke, that the younger Curtius was usually at the helm of the joint enterprises. "Rubbishin', hogwashy nonsense," he went on, "we aren't in the forties now, and we don't propose to play our gamble in minin' camps. Here's one of the neatest swindles the world's yet seen, and Heber Curtius afraid of his public. Mark me, dad, it's this infernal caution of yours that's landed us, stony broke ne'er-dowells, in Chicago; and where it may land us in the end, the Lord above knows only!"

"Gentlemen, please"—the suave English of Norrie came as oil on the troubled conversation—"there is no need to quarrel, I have not only brought the money, I have brought a plan of campaign as well. There is a good deal of sense in your father's arguments, John; people *are* too inquisitive in America. Now listen, and if I may, I'll send for whisky—no dry man can talk through this heat. Can I get a boy?"

"I'll tell the elevator kid," said Heber; and, going to the door, he shouted hoarsely.

"I hope your other idea's as good as that one, Mr. Norrie," he said, when the boy had gone. "Holy G—! I was dry."

"Listen then," the little man went on: "I was once, before the unfortunate occurrence, now, I have reason to believe, forgotten, an undergraduate at Cambridge; very shortly I am going to become an undergraduate at Oxford.—so is John—and the roulette wheel shall be not the least important item in our baggage."

"And me?" queried the old man.

"Oh, you shall be in it, Mr. Curtius, I've got a big part for you. Oh, how you will like the undergraduates! Simple—and you an American professional gambler. You'll hardly credit how simple they are. And lots of money, and they love to gamble, and when they've lost everything, they'll borrow more to lose; but as for thinking about concealed electric batteries, why, they'd never dream of it. Do you follow me, gentlemen? It is at Oxford that John's little wheel is going to make the first of its fortunes."

John Curtius was sprawled over a wicker chair, listening with an air of

amused intolerance. "Well," he said, speaking slowly with an exaggerated emphasis, "I am not personally a gambler by trade. I have not run a mile in a boom city street with the gunshots spoilin' the sidewalk around my heels."

The old man shivered, it was one of his least happy reminiscences; also, when it rained, his left leg jogged his memory.

"Nor," continued the young man, spitting elaborately against the stove bars, "have I ever written a reverend gent's name across a thirty-cent bill-stamp." It was Norrie's turn to shiver.

"These references, John, are in doubtful taste, they are also beside the point."

He coughed deprecatingly, the signature of the Dean of Trinity had been a terrible failure.

"All I wanted to point out"—the voice of John Curtius could be unpleasantly sarcastic—"is that I am not myself a gambler, wherefore I make no comments. If there is better money to be got in Europe, I back down, but I should like to meet the man in this up-to-date brainy continent who could spot anything shady in my little invention. Let me show you again."

"Oh, let the blame thing rest, sonny, we know its workin' by heart; Mr. Norrie has struck the right nail. Play it in the old country, we are safe; play it here, there'd be shootin'—and you'd make a tidy target, John. Say on, Mr. Norrie," and Heber cleared a sitting space for himself for the table.

"Oh, I back down," said John, "and here's the whisky; put it there, kiddy, and if any one wants Curtiuses', you've never heard of any—see? Now, Norrie, spit out your plot, you're driver this trip."

Norrie's scheme was simple. He was to enter the University at one College; John Curtius, as a young American of large fortune, at another. Heber Curtius the elder would be the concealed manipulator of the machine, and would, as far as possible, be an invisible partner. The gambling would take place in Norrie's rooms, in which John, as a casual acquaintance, was to lose large sums. A sufficiency of the right sort of

players could be, Norrie asserted, most easily discovered.

As the money required for the preliminary stages of the adventure had been obtained—they did not press Norrie as to the means of its acquisition—there was no need for further delay. Tickets for the voyage were taken that same evening, and as, three days later, the "City of Paris" surged into the swell, while Sandy Hook faded below the horizon, two of the partners in this novel enterprise were conscientiously employed at the poker table in the handsomely appointed smoking-room of the vessel.

The voyage passed without remarkable incident, and within but a few hours of the record passage. John Curtius, who was never tired of asserting that he was a gambler by chance, but by no means from choice, eschewed the smoking-room and became a great favourite among the engineers, who, by some fortunate chance, were not one of them Scotch. He had all but converted the chief to his theory of aerial navigation, when the appearance of the English coast concentrated the worthy fellow's thoughts on his wife and children at Fratton. Norrie, however, and old Heber Curtius stuck perseveringly to their *métier*; and though the really remarkable frequency of four aces in Mr. Curtius' hands excited some unfavourable comment among jealous passengers, the two confederates stepped on to the quay at Southampton with a comfortable addition to their capital.

As some time must of necessity elapse before arrangements could be completed for Norrie's and John Curtius' *début* as undergraduates of Oxford, they took rooms in a secluded portion of Chiswick, and in the energetic carrying out of the many essential preliminaries, the days passed quickly and happily enough. The matter of the necessary matriculation presented the greatest difficulty. Norrie broached the subject somewhat suddenly. "It will be necessary," he announced one morning at breakfast, "that we renew our acquaintance with the classics and the elementary mathematics, for there is an examination ahead."

John Curtius threatened a return to America; but eventually his fears were overcome, and, with the assistance of a clergyman in reduced circumstances, from whom he took daily lessons, he became an apt and even interested pupil. Meanwhile, Norrie, who was a real expert in handwriting, set about preparing the testimonials that were to be their passports into the University. Heber Curtius, who was perforce idle, made many expeditions about the Metropolis. He had formed, in a West-end bar, a chance acquaintance with a Mr. Caradoc Milnes, an author, and his father, whom the young man jokingly alluded to as Uncle Fiddeyment, a very pleasant, laughable old fellow with an intimate knowledge of life in London. He became Mr. Curtius' cicerone in many an exciting ramble.

The affair proceeded in a most satisfactory fashion. The testimonials, of which Norrie was justly proud, were accepted without a murmur. John Curtius invented an elaborate arrangement for concealing notes about the person, with the aid of which they both easily satisfied the examiners, and on a fine morning in the late Spring, took possession of their quarters in Oxford.

They had decided to wait for the Summer Term, for, according to Norrie, the undergraduates were accustomed to devote that portion of the academic year almost entirely to idle amusements.

Both the young men had obtained permission to live out of College, and Norrie, whose rooms were to be the scene of the enterprise, had obtained a really magnificent suite of apartments in the Cornmarket.

A few days were spent in making preparations for the working of the machine. John Curtius' roulette wheel was in appearance exactly the same as those commonly used in private houses, in which the numbers are so arranged that the reds alternate with the blacks, the even with the uneven, and those over eighteen with those under eighteen. Its peculiarity lay in a device by which either the red or the black, the high or the low, the even or the uneven, could be magnetised at will. The ball was composed of steel, with but a thin coating of ivory, so that it was certain

to finish its journey in one of the magnetised compartments. The speed at which the ball and the disc travelled were amply sufficient to effectually conceal any slight impetus or deflection in the course of the ivory sphere. However, as an additional safeguard, the conspirators had determined to have lights reflected brightly on to the tables, leaving the wheel somewhat in shade. The players were to sit about three sides of a long table, and the wheel was to be placed on a small table at the end. Beneath the floor, and by means of the legs of the small table, electrical communication was established with the next room, in which, observant but unobserved, Heber Curtius was to work at the direction of Norrie, the croupier, whom he could see through a minute slit in the wall. The manner in which he laid his hand upon the table was to indicate which of the sections of numbers the croupier desired to be magnetised. In this way Mr. Norrie and Messrs. Curtius were able to take a bank at roulette, against which a syndicate of millionaires would have been impotent of success.

It was a notable night in their history when, the trial trip of the apparatus having most admirably succeeded, they went out, all three together, to enjoy a dinner at a restaurant in the town. A fortunate chance in the conversation brought the name of Fiddeyment Milnes from Heber Curtius' lips; and, at the sound, a tall gentleman, of a very winning manner, started up from an adjoining table and approached them. It was not right, he explained, that mutual friends of Uncle Fiddeyment's should remain strangers to each other; and, excusing his intrusion on these grounds, he proffered an invitation to his rooms, where he was giving a party for baccarat and other card games. Here was luck, indeed; here were fish to be caught, with scarce the trouble of casting a line. The three accepted at once, and during the evening made a number of friends. Invitations to other card parties followed, at which the pleasant manners of Mr. Norrie and the quaint eccentricities of the two Americans attracted the friendship of many.

When, at last, it was judged advisable to open Norrie's *salon*, his invitations were eagerly accepted. To cement the position, Mr. Fiddeyment Milnes, who enjoyed an extraordinary popularity among undergraduates, was asked to Oxford on a visit; and James Norrie's parties became so rapidly fashionable,

elegant surroundings gave Mr. Norrie's *salon* all the *flair* of a continental casino, and it was proportionately attractive.

They were merry parties. Uncle Fiddeyment was pressed into service as croupier, and, a stalwart grog ever in front of him, maintained an inces-



"THEY WERE MERRY PARTIES"

that all conditions of young men intrigued to have the *entrée*. To accept Norrie's abundant hospitality at dinner, and, subsequently, to be seen at the gaming table in the Cornmarket, conferred that term a *cachet* of social position. Roulette, save for the smallest stakes, was of rare occurrence in the University; but the high play and

sant flow of the cheeriest witticisms. At the wheel, Norrie, alert and urbane, threw the fatal ball, and piled the winnings in the copper box at his elbow; while Heber Curtius, behind the wall, attended to the switches with the conscientious regularity of a signalman in his box. John Curtius lost large sums of money nightly, and

invented surprising histories of his adventures on the Pacific slopes.

The money rolled in in surprising quantities—you would not have thought there were so many sovereigns in the University. The possible interference of the authorities was, at first, a cause of alarm to some; but as the weeks passed, and no vision of proctorial dignity ever darkened the door, all fears were gradually allayed. It was certain that Heber Curtius might often be seen in the saloons of the town, jovially conversing with men of a large carriage, and that these conversations frequently ended with a quick passage of hands and a distinct clink of coin; but he made no public mention of his expeditions.

The fame of the parties spread even to London; and Mr. Caradoc Milnes, with his rich friend Mr. Cormorant, would often organise Saturday to Monday parties for the purpose of gambling at Oxford.

Norrie was completely happy. He was making money easily and quickly, and, what was the more pleasurable to him, he was doing it in the society of gentlemen. He shuddered when he remembered some of his associates in America. There seemed no reason why the gambling *salon* should not be continued for many Terms to come; and he had settled down into a lazy, careless life that exactly suited him.

It was on the Monday morning of the sixth week of Term that an element of disquiet appeared in his life. While walking, as was his custom, in the High Street before lunch, he was startled by the pronunciation of his name in a melodious female voice. Turning rapidly, he was confronted by a young lady of great personal charm, and most elegantly dressed.

"I thought I recognised you, Jimmy," she said, "though it must be, let me see, ten years."

"Eleven and a half," corrected Norrie, with all the composure he could muster.

"Well, a very long time since the night that you came to me with the tale of your troubles."

"And you lent me the money to go away. I have never forgotten, Agnes. For all these years—hard years, many

of them—the memory of your kindness has been my dearest possession. But I am an outcast now; I do not seek my old friends."

"Oh, the world has forgotten."

"And you, Agnes?"

"And I have forgiven. You were very young, Jimmy, and, perhaps, not altogether to blame. Well, let us leave the past. What are you doing in Oxford? I have come down for the eights."

"And Mr. Wagstaffe, your husband, is he with you?"

"Edward is dead."

They walked some way in silence.

"Yes," she continued, "I am a lone, lorn widow, rather solitary with all my money. I am quite alone here, save for my maid. I often come to Oxford; the sight of these boys puts months of fresh youth in me."

"If you are alone, Agnes, and you are not going to treat me as an outcast, may I see more of you? I should like to talk over old times, *some* old times."

They lunched together that day, and subsequently, save when the business of the gambling called him, Norrie was rarely absent from Mrs. Wagstaffe's side. In times gone by he had loved her with a mad, boyish passion, and during all the years of exile the love had slept but fitfully; the presence of her image in his heart had been the most cruel part of his punishment. To be with her again, to find the prettiness of the girl mellowed into the gracious beauty of the woman, and above all, to find that he was forgiven, seemed almost too much happiness to be true.

It was four days before he dared frame with his lips the words that were constantly shaping in his heart. Then, one fair summer's afternoon, as they sat, heedless of the roar of the races in the river beyond, in his punt beneath the trees that fringed a breakwater, she consented to be his wife.

Almost from the hour that he had first met her in the "High," he had determined to be done with the gambling. The thought of his ill-gotten gains seemed to choke the love phrases on his lips, the possibility of detection and shame, hitherto the faintest shadow on his life, became an ever-menacing

spectre. The constant fear lest some evil chance might tear him from the realisation of the one dream of his life made him very sure that he must run no risks.

As, in silence, too happy for speech, he drove the punt slowly homewards, past the long line of glittering barges, he made up his mind that to-night should see him call the last coup at roulette. Agnes had suggested that their life might be happier abroad, and with the coming of to-morrow he meant to definitely throw the sinister cloak of the old life from his shoulders.

He dined with Agnes at her hotel, and about nine o'clock, the hour usually agreed on for the gambling, set out for his own rooms.

The sky had become overcast and threatening, it was surprisingly dark for the time of year, and as he paused on

the steps of his lodging the lightning flickered behind the spires and towers of the colleges, and a deep growl of thunder ended with a sudden tempest of rain.

He passed upstairs, surmising from the empty dining-room that the play had already commenced. Coming to the door of the little room, where Heber Curtius played on the fatal wires, something drew him to visit the old man. He opened the door with his pass-key, and sat a few moments in silence, watching the puckered, observant eyes of the old gambler, and the ready fingers resting on the tiny key-board. The chatter of the players, and the monotonous clinking of coin came plainly through the slit in the wall. At intervals he heard the "Make your game!" and then the winning number called in John Curtius' hard, unsym-



"HE DINED WITH AGNES AT HER HOTEL"



"— PLAYED UPON THE FATAL WIRES"

pathetic voice. The room was almost dark. Fear of detection forbade a light, but no blind shielded the window, and a street lamp lent a fitful glimmer. In the street below a few undergraduates, their gowns twisted about their necks, were hurrying home through the storm.

As Norrie looked down Broad Street, a great open flare of lightning rose up behind the buildings and seemed to stay there, burning like magnesian wire. Every detail of the room stood confessed. It seemed to Norrie like a fore-warning of vengeance, a search-light sent from hell to make patent their sin. The old man whispered to him, "This is dangerous work on a night like this, Mr. Norrie. Try and get the game stopped early. I'm taking my life in my hands here."

Norrie went on tip-toe across the room, and, making a silent exit, entered

with a forced hilarity among the gamblers. The scene was a mixture of gaiety and sadness. The boisterous good humour of Uncle Fiddeyment, and the easy bearing of those who had money to spend, and found this a pleasant way of spending it, were partly infectious. Many a young fool, who was busy throwing his life chances into the fire, roared a drunken appreciation of the old man's wit.

It seemed to Norrie, as he stood behind the players, that never before had he realised the utter sordidness of it all. The play was ruling higher than usual, and the gains of the bank were heavy. The boy at John's elbow, Norrie knew well, had sacrificed all for the gambling. His lectures had been unattended, his books had lain untouched throughout the Term. The result of his final schools, on which depended his future livelihood,

was horribly easy to guess. About the table sat other boys in like case. Again and again Norrie thanked heaven that to-morrow he left for London. He would take his winnings up to the present moment, withdraw his capital, and the Curtiuses might go on if they liked.

He felt a little afraid of announcing his withdrawal to John, and watched him apprehensively as he stood by the wheel, a sinister instrument of fate, joking harshly with some of the players. Outside, the wind screamed like the music of an orchestra of the damned, and there was continual slamming of the hall door as man after man availed himself of this genial haven. Among others came Caradoc Milnes and Cormorant, just arrived from town and clamouring for drink and play.

Norrie stood by the sideboard and assisted in the business of the whisky decanters and the syphons. As each hour chimed from the clock he felt the load lighten on his shoulders. At eleven o'clock he had become almost cheerful, knowing that in another hour the play must stop. He sat on a raised window seat, close by Cormorant, and chatted about London and the theatres.

About half-past eleven, a young man, who had always complained loudly of his losses, rose unsteadily to his feet and stood at John Curtius' elbow. Norrie watched him uneasily; he saw danger in the angry lines of his face.

Curtius turned to him.

"Had enough, Evers," he said, "why didn't you back that run?"

"Oh, damn you and your runs," the boy answered, "this board's uncanny, I can't play against it—why, look at the ball jumping. Oh, I say! look at it; it went in and came out again. I'll swear it did!" Norrie turned pale, and gripped the cushion of his seat; the slightest breath of suspicion terrified him. He hoped that Heber Curtius would hear, and have the sense to stop working the wires; several men were already looking into the wheel. They were talking, but the noise of the wind and the incessant thunder was so loud that their words did not reach him.

The man who had spoken had drawn a little back, and was fumbling with his waistcoat pocket. Something glittered in his hand, and to Norrie's unspeakable horror he saw that it was a compass. He knew that if the wires were still in use the deception must be instantly detected, and, stumbling to the floor, he lurched across the room, meaning to simulate drunkenness and upset the roulette wheel. In the ensuing confusion he trusted to luck to conceal any apparatus.


Before he got near the table, he saw the boy's face light up and words shape on his lips. He quickened his step and shouted to divert attention, when the house shook as if it was the sport of an earthquake. There was a noise like the screaming of the wind through all the telegraph wires in the world, an unearthly glamour of light, and then the room was in darkness save where flames burst from the floor and the further wall. There was a horrible smell of burning flesh. The gamblers fought savagely to reach the door, and alone, unmoved, Uncle Fiddeyment sat on in his chair.

"There is plenty of time, Norrie," he said. "Do not risk your life at that door; look at Cormorant and Caradoc, I had thought better of them."

The fire was quickly subdued by the engines, and three charred bodies were carried out of the house. The boy with the compass, and the two Curtiuses had been struck dead by the lightning.

After the funeral, Norrie left Oxford with Mrs. Wagstaffe, and three days later they were married at a registry office in the presence of Uncle Fiddeyment and Charles Cormorant, whose limp had entirely left him, owing, he asserted, to being partially struck by lightning.

Norrie lived happily with his wife for many years in the various continental cities of fashion, but he was never able to forget that fearful scene when he had stood on the brink of ruin, and the roulette wheel had in the very nick of time veritably called down fire from Heaven to silence the mouth of its accuser.



THERE IS MANY A SLUR

OR, THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

WRITTEN BY L. WYNN-LESLIE
ILLUSTRATED BY L. A. CARTER

DARK, dank and dismal was the night of the storm that raged over London, and did such great damage to the city, in the year of our Lord 1703. On that memorable night stacks of chimneys were flung into the streets below, houses were stripped of their roofs, and tiles dashed to fragments, or driven deep into the earth, to the great danger of any belated citizen.

It was evening. The wind blew in fitful gusts that moaned among the projecting gables of the houses, and hissed through winding alleys. Solid squadrons of cloud marched sullenly across a lurid sky; the atmosphere was charged with a premonition of storm—that feeling of anxious unrest always noticeable before any grand convulsion of the elements. On the river, the flood-tide meeting the stream, struggled round the slimy, scum-coated piers of old London Bridge, and eddied away in long pallid streaks of foam.

Now, old London Bridge was like a street, being covered from bank to bank with houses, and on one side, even a church. Each end of the bridge was guarded by an arched gateway, ornamented with felons' heads, ghastly and grim, stuck upon long iron spikes. As building space upon the bridge was of necessity very limited, the massive stone piers were in some cases utilised, having

cellars and chambers built in the great width of the masonry.

This street was deserted. The lights which glimmered in the windows, or shot into the gloom through cracks of the rotting shutters only served to make the darkness more apparent. The bridge-folk were safe within doors, for that was the night of the Great Storm, long portended.

Yet no! Some one was still abroad.

The cobbles of the narrow roadway rang with the tread of hurrying feet; the walls echoed stamp for stamp. A person close-mantled hastened past overhanging houses and gloomy doors, glancing neither right nor left, until at last he stopped at a portal gloomier than the rest. The man unlocked the iron-studded door, and entered a passage dimly lit by a spluttering lamp which made the old oak wainscoting shine dully. He threw off his cloak, disclosing (if any intruder had been there to see) a hideously deformed body, all ugliness and disproportion. The head was huddled between unequally elevated shoulders, the back was humped, and the arms long and huge, whilst the features were coarse and sullen. This was the alchemist's dwarf—his dog, his dumb slave.

Taking the lantern, the dwarf descended a narrow flight of stairs, which creaked as he trod the worm-eaten boards. From the bottom of this flight

he carefully threaded his way among a number of barrels and crates of merchandise to the opposite wall, where at the touch of some concealed spring a block of stone slid back, revealing a spiral stairway. He crept down the rough steps until his further progress was barred by an iron door at which he rapped.

After waiting for some minutes, he knocked again, louder than before, this time succeeding in gaining some response from within. A rusty bolt grated back, a chain clanked, and the dwarf was admitted by an old and venerable man.

"You ha' come at last, then?" he said. "You disturbed me. You ha' brought the chemical I bade you? 'Tis well." The old man took the chemical, and returned to his work once more.

The dwarf closed and bolted the door again securely. The room in which he stood merits some description, but first, perhaps it may be best to introduce its presiding genius. He was clad in a heavy robe of black cloth, drawn in at the waist by a girdle. His long white hair swept disordered over knit brows, of which the many lines and furrows proclaimed a life dedicated to over-much study, and his tall lean figure was bent with stooping over manuscript or crucible, yet was still noble and commanding. But his deep-set eyes ever wore an apprehensive look, a wild expression of fear, as if some lurking danger was ever at his elbow. Such then, briefly, was Doctor Price, the Alchemist. The world knew little about him. The people on the bridge called him Wizard, and passed his habitation as far away as the narrowness of the road allowed. He seldom left his sombre hermitage, then only at night and alone.

The laboratory, the very atmosphere of which breathed heavy of alchemy, was very small, for indeed it was but a cell in the pier, and below the water-level when the tide was in full flood. At the time when the dwarf entered, the sole illumination was the flickering light of a furnace, over which hung a large retort. That end of the chamber was filled with a ruddy glow, the many recesses and corners being left in almost total darkness. Near the furnace a

shelved recess was filled with test-tubes, cucurbites, phials, and all the various paraphernalia appertaining to the alchemic art. On shelves extending to the low vaulted roof were bottles of many chemicals. To the immediate right of the fire stood a heavy oaken table, black with age, and polished by constant use; by it a large celestial globe reflected, glimmer for glimmer, the furnace glow. From a beam overhead a skeleton was dangling, the flickering light playing a gruesome hide-and-seek among its polished bones. A brazier fantastically wrought was suspended from its ankles by three chains, whilst the rough walls of the vault were ornamented with huge stuffed lizards, vampires with wings outspread, crocodiles, and other loathsome beasts. The door was draped with black curtains, which rustled mysteriously when touched. Over it, with bony heels resting on the lintel, squatted another skeleton with outstretched arms. Above, in hideous mockery, was blazoned the one word, "BENEDICITE."

This was the cell in which the old alchemist toiled—had toiled away his lifetime—and would continue to toil until he found at last that *Lapis Philosophorum* for which he searched, or in the meantime died of the river-damps that were eating fast into his bones.

Doctor Price had bent again over his work; the dwarf retreated to his closet, a sort of small oubliette still lower than the laboratory. The crystal powder which his servant had just brought was a last resort, and the result meant success, or ruin utter and complete. He was wrought up to the highest pitch, his muscles quivered, his breath came and went in short, sharp gasps. The climax of a life was nearly reached.

Two hours later the old man still strained over the retort which contained all his hopes. "In a few minutes—in a little hour, at most," he moaned, as he watched intensely. Suddenly he bent yet closer to the vessel with a cry of joy: "At last! At last, it changes!"

The liquid was indeed undergoing a transformation. It had been dull and clouded; now it slowly, almost imperceptibly, cleared. The alchemist turned to one of the ponderous tomes



" TURNED TO ONE OF THE PONDEROUS TOMES BESIDE HIM "

on the table beside him, following with bony forefinger some mystic formulæ. In time the contents of the retort became tinged with colour, which rapidly developed into a full, warm red. The climax was almost attained! The old man clung to the table for support, his features twitching violently, a clammy sweat upon his forehead. When at last a precipitate collected at the bottom of the retort, a hoarse cry broke from his dry lips, for his life-work was that night achieved.

The prize was won. The alchemist staggered to the door, for he knew that until the vessel cooled with the dying of the fire there was nothing further to be done. Stumbling up the spiral stairways, he rushed out into the street, thinking to calm himself in the cool night air.

It was raining heavily; the wind went bursting between the buildings in sudden, boisterous gusts. Doctor Price heeded them not, however, but strode on, only drawing his mantle closer round him. The strife of the elements suited his own excited mood. Yea, he would have danced for very joy, but that his old limbs refused the task.

The aim of his life; the end to which he had laboured night and day; the grand substance for which hundreds of other men from the earliest times had sought, and vainly sought, had been at last discovered—and by *him*. The weary hours of study and research, the hours of stooping over crucibles, the anguish of repeated failure—what were they to him now? Memories, nothing more! What mattered it that his prime was past? Would he not have gold to cheer his old age? Gold, good red gold, to buy the world, the flesh, or the devil; aye, and Heaven too, for he was a good Catholic. He would turn everything into gold, and revolutionise the world. The very spears of light from the windows seemed to him to be bars of gold; the raindrops as they caught the rays seemed molten gold; the gutter-spouts dripped gold; the flag-stones gleamed gold; the gusts of wind howled "Gold, gold, gold."

His brain was aflame! With joy he was distraught, and he strode forward, neither heeding nor caring the direction

he might take, when the abrupt cessation of all noise and buffeting of the wind aroused him. Peering into the darkness for some clue as to his whereabouts he perceived that his wanderings had brought him far from home.

The lull was short-lived. It was but the calm before the tempest that with a sudden roar burst over the city. Then steeples rocked, and stacks of chimneys were thrown down, windows burst in, and doors dashed open. Then wives clung to husbands in their beds, and children screamed aloud in terror. The livid sky was rent by fiery lightning that threatened the high edifices of the town, and the continuous thunder shook the very foundations of the earth. During that, the most violent storm that ever raged over our city of London, roofs were ripped off, trees torn up, and some of the older houses were even razed to the ground.

Doctor Price was thrown off his legs into a deep doorway by the first blast, and very fortunately so as it happened, for a shower of tiles from the house-top would otherwise certainly have killed him. He lay as one dead for a short time, but on recovering and finding himself the worse only by a few bruises, he made his way towards the bridge, seeing nothing of the havoc going on around him, and marvellously escaping all danger. The river was white as beaten cream; foam-capped waves dashed headlong against the bridge, drenching it with spray. Occasionally a barge torn from its moorings was dimly visible through clouds of hurtling spume and driving sheets of rain, like some uneasy shade, driven on in the toils of the storm to its inevitable destruction.

Doctor Price became fearful for his life as he stumbled on through piles of rubbish that encumbered the ground. But defending his face with his arm, and seeking what little protection there might be from the walls beside which he groped, the old man at last reached his house, bruised and bleeding, almost prostrate with fatigue. The memory alone of what awaited him below buoyed him up, and a measure of brandy poured out in trembling haste lent renewed vigour to his body for a time.

The laboratory, when he entered it, was in darkness, so the alchemist felt his way to the hanging brazier, as he went, kicking a skull which rolled chattering against the flag-stones. The little vault by the pale light of the skeleton-suspended brazier looked even weirder than before. The erstwhile jumping furnace-flames had at least cast a ruddy glow over the laboratory, but the present wan illumination gave it the appearance of a chamber of death. Even here penetrated the din of the tempest without. The shriek of the gale, and the mad waves dashing upon the pier made it tremble, and the timbers creak.

The retort, now cool, was half-filled with a dull purplish powder, and some red liquid. The old alchemist drained away the fluid part into a beaker, afterwards pouring with scrupulous care the powder—the Philosopher's Stone—into a shallow earthenware basin, the rim of which he kissed with a reverence that was almost blasphemy ere he put it down, and bathed his hand in it, letting it trickle through his greedy, trembling fingers.

Then suddenly a change swept over him—he lost all self-control. Standing erect before the furnace-altar, with upraised arms and staring eyes, he shouted, "Scream on, ye winds! Dash on, ye waves! With all your vaunted power ye cannot harm me here. Ye cannot break the solid rock, neither can ye upheave the mountain. I'm safe within my cell, I and my secret—my secret and I! A fit night this for such a grand discovery. Gold—Ha, ha, ha, ha! Gold! Gold! . . . Heaven thunders forth my victory, and groaning Hell makes wild reply. The world's wealth is within my grasp—the Philosopher's Stone is mine! Ha, ha, ha!"

He rocked himself wildly, shaking his clenched fists above his head. His frenzied peals of terrible laughter rang through the vaulted chamber. Such is success: he was mad.

"Rain on, ye rain! Flash on, ye levin! Roll on, ye thunders! 'Tis a worthy salvo to a grand discovery. Gold—all, all is gold! The walls are gold, the floor is gold, those long-dead bones are gold. I'll swear they

are gold! Look! Look, you leaping, gleaming devils, I can see vistas of gold—I can see a city of gold; in the streets piles of gold; men dressed in cloth of gold; but—they are all starving—starving. . . . Eh? Eh? . . . What does it mean? Starving!" The old man tottered and fell, and lay still upon the cold, damp stones. In falling, he struck with his elbow a large gong. The hollow note reverberated through the laboratory, and the dwarf appeared through the opening in the floor from his closet below.

He sprang to his master's side, and after a weary time succeeded in restoring him to consciousness. Doctor Price stared about him, dazed for a moment, until recollection gleamed from his dull eyes.

"Dwarf," he whispered, coughing up a clot of blood, "Dwarf, I am rich—rich beyond all understanding, and you shall be rich, too. Yea, I am rich, rich, rich, and you have always been faithful unto me. I saw heaps of gold—" He struggled to his feet. "Eh? Eh?" he mumbled, "Where is it all?" Then he caught sight of his powder. "Begone, you crawling deformity," he shrieked in a passion; "why do you stand shivering there when I have ordered you a thousand times to bring me those kegs of iron?"

The tempest without raged more grievously than ever; the very bridge quaked. Ah yes! and whilst the old man had lain unconscious, something had cracked in the roof. He did not note an ominous sound like the ticking of some great great gruesome clock—Drip—drip—drip. So!

Taking a melting-pot, Doctor Price poured into it some scraps of metal that the dwarf had already brought. To this he added a carefully-measured quantity of the *Lapis Philosophorum*. The dwarf, in the meanwhile, fanned the furnace into a vigorous blaze, until his master motioned him away as he placed the pot among the flames. Then, heedless of smoke or heat, the alchemist bent over the vessel with no thought for anything but his task. For a full hour he watched it thus, scarce a muscle moving, save occasionally when he stirred the seething mass, or turned to

blow the fire to a greater heat. He heard nothing of the creaking beams overhead, nothing of the slowly-chafing stones, nothing of Death, forcing its cruel fingers through the crannies of the straining roof.

Suddenly he uttered a gasping, sobbing cry, "At last! *It changes! It is GOLD!*"

Yes, indeed, the secret of the transmutation of metals, which had baffled the chemists and wise men of all ages, was solved that night in the tiny laboratory hid there in a pier of old London Bridge. Yet, even at that supreme moment of success, the alchemist caught the sound of fast-trickling water. He sprang up too late to plug the hole. There was a grinding crash, and a deluge of water gushed in through a yawning aperture, open to wind and wave. The torrent drowned the furnace instantly, filling the vault with scalding steam. Doctor Price was driven back by the first rush of water, but strove frantically to reach, not the gold, but his wondrous powder. In vain! Chaos held possession of that lonely cell. Stone after stone fell in; the mad wind shrieked exultant through the breach. The river-waters, rushing down the trap-opening, flung back the poor terror-stricken dwarf, who strained up the crazy ladder calling piteously for his master's aid. The alchemist, driven backwards to the same abyss, made frantic efforts to reach the iron door in safety. Clutching madly at anything—at nothing—in his agony, he was swept downwards through the

hatch, screaming "My Gold! My Gold!"

There can be little more to add.

The habitation of Doctor Price was no longer an object of fear to the bridge-folk. Its secrets were disclosed; the wizard himself had departed, no one knew whither, in the storm. The privacy of the flooded laboratory was profaned by the inquisitive watermen, who gazed through the ragged breach and wondered, and probed as far as they could reach with their long boat-hooks, looking with horror upon the skull and shoulder-girdle of the skeleton that still hung from the roof, the turbid Thames waters rippling among its ribs.

But what of Doctor Price himself?

There he lay in the little oubliette, with his dwarf—and his secret. It yet remains for some other one to wring from Nature that secret by which base metals may be turned to gold. Thus was lost to the world a wondrous discovery; a discovery that would have killed all poverty and want, a discovery that would have made all men rich; a discovery that would have thrust gold into the hands of men—

But hold—what am I saying?

The ghost of the dead rises up, and whispers: "*They are starving! They are all starving!*"

Our beloved gold would then be but dross. Then brass and lead and iron would be the valued metals. And then? Why then would spring into existence men who would labour their lives away striving to make gold—lead!





MARGATE JETTY

Bank Holiday Impressions at the Seaside

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY REGINALD H. COCKS

THE manner in which the masses are catered for on the occasion of our great national holidays is nothing short of wonderful.

The tripper in these days of reduced rates can see as much in the limited holiday at his command (possibly it is a question of hours only for him), as our forefathers would have done in as many weeks. There is a strong argument which holds good on either side. A poet has said with regard to present day freedom of the tourist :—

“Grant him that leisure, and the man’s undone ;

No real cares, ’tis true, perplex his breast,
But thousand fancied ills his peace molest.”

Be that as it may, everybody can get good value for his money nowadays—too good sometimes !— should the spirit of unrest prevail upon him.

The tripper (and I must make a distinction between the two), pays and sees, while the tourist *sees* and pays at a more reasonable pace, even if he should form but a tittle of a “personally conducted” party.

But you need go no farther than Brighton or ‘appy “Margit,” if you desire some enlightenment as to how the crowd spends the time, and there are no places more representative of a tripper’s paradise than either of the afore-mentioned.

Our beloved climate (and one that is so much maligned as to almost grant it just retaliation in its vagarious moods), without a doubt "pulls the strings," yet it takes a surprising lot to damp the exuberant spirits of a bank-holiday pilgrim.

His commissariat, generally speaking, consists of a plentiful supply of shrimps, which are reserved for a banquet on the beach.

Failing that, he has much faith in the passive whelk, which may be had "ad lib." from the numerous barrows on the front.

Then that large species of oyster, but rarely seen, except on these occasions, comes to support the famished appetite, eaten without bread and washed down with beer at 11 a.m. while the "native," a superior bivalve would fain shun such habitations, and holds aloof.

An extraordinary supply of pence finds its way into those automatic machines, which have a little way of showing an iron resolution to keep the coin, whether they work or not.

I quite recently watched the collector pay a visit at early morn following Bank-holiday to each of these machines at the end of the pier, and—talk about a "corner" in copper!—he literally filled the four corners of a Gladstone portmanteau with the plunder.

But what is that amongst so many? The rental of half-a-dozen of these machines and two small stalls at the end of the pier in question amounts to no less than £800 a year! Those that like may "cal'clate" as to how many "coppers" have to be set aside before even expenses are covered!

The better class restaurants do not fully appreciate Bank-holiday custom; it is all fuss and little profit.

As an example of this, I overheard the following pregnant observation of a disappointed waiter, whilst flipping off the stray crumbs from the table, with that indispensable adjunct—a napkin:—

"Some more stuck on paper and won't come off!"—this with reference to the bill which he tightly screwed up, after the feasters had quitted.

And in confirmation of the proverbial



MARGATE BEACH

meanness of trippers, a story has been going the rounds to the effect that someone had the confidence to devour half-a-dozen oysters opposite a looking-glass, with the palpable object of beguiling himself into the idea that he had consumed a dozen.

But Brighton boasts peculiarities of its own.

Why is it all London newspapers which are hawked in the streets and more especially on the front, cost double their proper price?

While the people that so dispose of them will never yield, but rather retain the paper than be beaten down in price, the majority of folks are perfectly content

speaking of holiday times)? Very few, if the number of those I recently witnessed, was any guide.

Whilst the collector is making his rounds from seat to seat, there are people who take a rest, and, when the man arrives and asks for the penny charge—pointing as evidence to the notice on the back of the seat, the sitter invariably gets quietly up and states that he or she (generally "she") was entirely ignorant of the fact, and whilst so saying, walks off to do likewise further up the beach.

It has been said of Mr. Fred. Collins, of the yacht "Skylark" fame, a skipper of the old school, that such a one Charles



MASKS AND FACES AT BRIGHTON

to swell the handsome profit (about three farthings on each paper sold) and buy the journals, thus giving their support to a custom which is doubtless illegal and one which could readily be dealt with from the right quarter.

However the larger number of trippers pay double when they really have no provocation, and, *vice-versâ*, don't pay at all when there is occasion.

Those benches on the beach are an example of the latter inference. According to the statement found upon the back of each seat, one penny is the authorised charge for each person so occupying the space, but how many people, do you suppose, think of paying up when the moment comes (and I am

Dickens or "Phiz" would have longed to caricature and depict.

There is no doubt, that Cap'n Collins is a striking personality, almost as broad as he is short, with long curly black hair, partially hidden by that unique little shiny black sailor hat slightly tilted on one side, together with a good show of cuff and an ample display of linen on his expansive chest—these idiosyncrasies cannot fail to mark him out as being no ordinary seaman.

It is a sight to see the little man busy-ing himself with his several yachts on the occasion of a fine bank-holiday.

As fast as one returns (shilling an hour) it is hauled a short distance up the beach and then swung round on a

small turn-table, with bow facing the sea, ready for another start.

"Sailin' again in a few minutes, gents, sailin' again," Capt. Collins rapidly repeats, whilst throwing himself hand and foot into whatever commands he may be shouting to his crew and help-mates. The few minutes extend to a good half-hour, whilst the boat is laden with smiling, shouting trippers, who look singularly helpless, as they rock from side to side—a foretaste of what is to come!

It is not too much to say that this gentleman is a mariner of very wide experience, seeing that he has now conducted some thousand launches and sails in his famous "Skylarks," for a period extending over forty years, and this is no mean performance when, as on the occasions of Bank-holidays, sea-trips follow one another in such rapid succession that the enormous crowds on the beach greatly impede the carrying-out of these highly responsible duties.

There are few places where so varied a supply of entertainment is to be found as on Brighton Lower Parade during holiday time. Yet it is very doubtful whether these many efforts are appreciated to the full, whether it be the serious-looking individual breaking beach flints with his naked fist, a performance which he vows to have given *before* most crowned heads, fortunately not *on* them,—or the less muscular efforts of a personage styling himself "the Court Jester," whose many inaudible remarks

barely met with the hearty response that might have been granted them on trust. For instance, one woman—with feathers of serious magnitude clinging to a hat of similar proportions, made one poignant query as she squeezed her way through the crowd, taking small heed at the breathless observations of the Jester—" 'E 'aint right, is he? "

Gramo-grapho-phono-graphs galore were spotted about the beach, reminding one of Italy, if only because of the resemblance to pipe-macaroni which the rubber unsavoury ear-tubes favoured.

The inmates of the Aquarium had their admirers. The famous old bear at the entrance doors was surrounded with votive offerings, principally consisting of chocolate-cream and *Sunday* (!) newspapers. Nor was the sea-lion wholly forgotten, for around him lay a half-devoured piece of cake, a piece of orange-peel, one lucifer match, and paper bags for him to stow away the surplus.

Those many barrows with the inscription "Pure Hokey-Pokey" (kept cool in flannel, and tucked tight up under the vendor's arm) seem to imply a contradiction in terms, yet the trade in this condiment of doubtful extraction was unusually brisk, and went fair to balance the slump in "nugget," so pronounced, but spelt "nougat."

"To the Dyke and Back"; but no, we will spare our readers. Yet "a Channel Trip,"—"Fares There *and Back*, 1s. 6d." beyond the dreams of avarice, but we should like to know first what a *single* fare will involve.





DARJEELING

Two Indian Days

WRITTEN BY GERTRUDE BACON. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS

FOUR o'clock of a January morning, and the long train pulls up beside the yet longer platform of that important junction Moghal Serai, and discharges those passengers who here are about to exchange from the G.I.P. Railway to the O. and R. These letters, of course, stand for the Oude and Rohilcund, though to the unregenerate and flippant they signify the "Old and Rotten"—a

playful term of affection we may suppose, for, to the outward eye, this line appears neither better nor worse than its compeers.

The few Englishmen who step out of the incoming train make but a sorry show. The majority of them are from Bombay, and have spent thirty-six hours—two nights and a day—in a compartment of, say, 8 feet by 10, containing three seats, two upper berths, a wooden slab, and as much dust as

would furnish an entire terminus in far-distant England. Unshaven, unwashed, rumpled, and bedraggled, their eyes heavy with sleep, the little party tumble out on to the dark platform, and stand shivering in the chill night air; a doleful group, lost among a small mountain of baggage, boxes, and bedding rolls, and a large army of the inevitable coolies. They are tired, they are cold, they are exceedingly cross to boot, for the mail being an hour behind time, the connecting train has started without waiting for it, and there is no other for three hours at least.

It is pitch dark without, for the sun is not yet risen. The station is dimly lighted with feeble oil lamps, whose sickly rays disclose, indistinctly, loose bundles of clothing untidily strewn upon the stone pavement, which closer investigation reveals as sleeping natives, motionless, and wrapped in nondescript shawls and cloths. Across these heaps stumble passengers and officials, and among them flits the ubiquitous, indispensable, courteous, albeit harassed, English station master—a mere boy in looks, but old in experience of the wily Hindu and his ways; for where in all India is such an opportunity for study afforded as at the junction of Moghal Serai?

Daylight at last, and in due course the Benares train. But by this time the station has assumed another and yet stranger aspect. The piles of rags are now awake and animate, disclosing themselves as lean, lithe figures, with bare brown legs, none too straight, and swarthy, patient faces enveloped in many-coloured wrappings. They shiver in the fresh, crisp air, and draw their cloths tighter around their heads and shoulders. The uncovered legs are left to take care of themselves.

But the number of these resuscitated ragbags has been enormously augmented from other sources. Another train has come in, and from nooks and corners hitherto unnoticed pour ever fresh recruits, until the whole platform is one seething mass of brown struggling humanity, of every age, from the senile, decrepit old man, whose face is a network of wrinkles, and whose bones seem actually protruding through his

shrunken, shrivelled skin, to the stark naked infant bestriding his mother's hip, his round little, tight little, brown body reminding one strongly of a week-old black pig—what a Berkshire man would speak of as “a little runt.”

Kaleidoscopic are the colours of this motley crowd, and wonderful the diversity of rank, race, and calling. Here is a native princelet of high degree, clad completely in a tight-fitting suit of purple velvet; here a lean, chocolate-tinted being, whose poverty is so extreme that his turban is reduced to a mere wisp, and the scantiest rag of discoloured loin-cloth makes up the whole of the rest of his wardrobe. Here a fat, oily Bengalee Babu, his dress the quaintest mixture of East and West that it is possible to conceive; for he wears a black coat over a wondrous white, folded, flowing garment that takes the place of trousers, and discloses a wide expanse of brown, bare calves, terminating in cotton socks and patent-leather boots, elastic-sided, with the tags well in evidence. He wears no hat, and a large umbrella is an essential part of his mixed costume. Then we have fierce-bearded Mohammedans, with gay turbans of gigantic proportions; smart, picturesque native police; women with plain features, rendered yet plainer by hideous nose ornaments, but holding themselves like goddesses, and clothed with flowing draperies that hang about them in folds of perfect beauty; while among the crowd wander sundry loathsome figures with paint-smeared countenances, wild eyes, and awful masses of long matted hair wound round their heads in filthy coils. We instinctively shrink back at the approach of such an object, though round his shoulder we note the Brahmin's sacred thread, and we know him for a Fakir, holy beyond words, and almost an object of worship to even that velvet-robed rajah himself.

There are other and more ghastly objects to be seen. There are figures scarred and mutilated with terrible disease. There are sick, and helpless, and infirm, borne and supported by friends and relatives. There are faces with the shadow of death dark upon them; sometimes there is Death himself.

From incoming trains at Moghal Serai it is no uncommon thing for the officials to remove three or four dead bodies in a day. For it is the junction for Benares, whither flock the sick and dying from the uttermost parts of the empire to draw their last breath in the Sacred City; and for some the end comes all too soon.

But the surging mass of natives and the little group of English are packed into the train at last, and a short run brings them to the noble railway bridge over the Ganges, a triumph of British engineering skill and enterprise scarce to be surpassed. And what a noble view here opens out before longing eyes! Below flows the placid river, in broad shimmering curves to the horizon, bordered by long stretches of silvery sand, the bed of a furious torrent at other seasons. And beyond, on the further bank, rises, tier on tier, the Holy City, the clustered temples, the flights of steps, the sacred buildings, all huddled together in most picturesque confusion; and rearing high above the town, towering aloft into the pure morning sky, soar the slender minarets of the Mosque of Aurungzeb, proud emblem of a later faith, that dared to plant its foot even in the citadel of Brahminism itself, and by this impos-

ing building, erected in the midst of all that is holiest to the Hindu, to keep in the perpetual remembrance of a conquered people, the abhorred supremacy of the Mohammedan rule.

The station at Benares lies beyond the City, where the Cantonments are, and the trim bungalows and the church and the post-office and the bank, where the country is open and the roads broad and shady with trees, and the purple Bourganvillia flings its gorgeous mantle over trim white walls. The hotel, in its quiet compound, in which the roses flourish in the well-tended beds, is a veritable paradise, its bathrooms, with big tin tubs, a delicious luxury after the sweltering trains. All is peaceful and calm repose during the midday heat, but with cooler hours comes a desire for exploration, and the carriages arrive to take the refreshed travellers to the town.

Half-a-mile's drive only, but are we in the same neighbourhood, the same country even? The shady roads and cool houses are gone; instead behold a human ant-hill, of 500,000 inhabitants, crowded into the fewest possible acres, surely, that in this world contain such a population. Narrow winding streets, choked with every sort of traffic, littered with brown babies playing in the dust, with squatting barbers shaving their



STREET IN BENARES

customers, squatting before them, without water and without soap ; squatting mothers performing operations on their children's matted heads that shall be nameless. The narrow track bordered by long mud huts in which, each in his own little pigeonhole, squat the merchant, the tailor, the brass-worker, the weaver, the smith, every conceivable trade of a mighty city. Thicker grows the swarm as we penetrate deeper into the hive. The mud huts give place to infinitely dilapidated brick buildings, the streets grow narrower and fouler ; the course is impeded by the sacred kine, immensely holy but horribly in the way, that roam at their own sweet will whither the spirit moves them. What with these and the houses nearly touching each other the carriage proceeds with ever-increasing difficulty.

We are reaching the holy buildings now. At one corner we leave the "gharry" to pick our way up a tiny alley to the roof of a house where stands the ancient observatory built by a kingly scientist 300 years ago. Here are giant sun-dials, mural circles and what not, built of stone of the most massive construction, oriented and graduated with infinite skill and labour. Among these colossal instruments sit two learned Brahmins, on mats, swaying their bodies rhythmically to and fro, and reading aloud in monotonous chant from the sacred books spread before them. They take no notice whatever of the strangers, and never pause in their sing-song, but the faithful disciples around them do not fail to solicit alms for their support. As the white-helmeted, be-kodaked English party troop back down the alley a withered old woman cowers abjectly against the wall, lest the shadow of the infidel fall across her, entailing some weary work of purification.

The temples are crowded thick around, of varying interest and holiness, but most sacred of all is the Golden Temple, the focus of sanctity, the Holy of Holies ; containing the holy well, the holy bulls, the holy tree (or one of them), and what else of highest worship to the millions of Hindus scattered throughout India. Wonder, disgust, and sadness falls on the European who enters here. Wonder at the religion

that prompts the adoration of that monstrous, hideous, flower-decked, red-painted caricature of a bull, to mention only one of the many idols within. Disgust at the putrid waters of the utterly offensive well in which the lepers bathe and the faithful drink with ecstasy, at the loathly fakirs, their faces white with ashes, at the utter filth and squalor of the whole den ; and sadness for the fate of this vast population, so sunk in idolatry and superstition, so powerless to rise, so hopeless to aid.

More interesting and certainly cleaner is the temple of the Monkey-god. Here in a quiet court with lofty walls, live the sacred apes, scores and hundreds of them, sitting on the roofs and ledges, swinging on the branches of the over-shadowing trees, grinning, gibbering, and making faces from every nook and corner above, below and around. A handful of corn is given to the visitor, and instantly a dozen tiny hands are placed in his, and tiny fingers, uncanny in their humanness of touch and miniature size, take the grains gently from his palm. In the centre stands the shrine where priests kneel in adoration before another hideous, grotesque, red idol, and offer it wreaths and chaplets of yellow flowers. As the stranger passes, one of these strings of blossoms, wet with holy water, is dexterously flung over him, which the guide in attendance warns him to carefully preserve and wear till out of the temple, lest offence be given.

While we yet stand within comes a sound of much shuffling and commotion, and round the court there presently arrives the quaintest object imaginable. Four attendants are engaged in carrying along a small, square tent, with curtains closed carefully round it, but which, somehow, seems animated of itself, for sounds of voices come from within, and beneath the draperies are to be caught glimpses of brown feet with heavy anklets and scraps of gorgeous robes. This strange procession scuffles along with difficulty and noise, and soon we know it to be a bevy of ladies from some rich harem, come to worship at the temple, the tent of course shielding their beauty from unlawful eyes.

Hard by here lives Sri Swamy Bhas-karanand Saraswati, the Holy Man, special friend of Mark Twain's, and a species of god in himself. He lives in a beautiful garden with a high wall round, but before entering, the guide begs leave, for the sake of the ladies, to go in and prepare the way for the visit, for such is the sanctity of Sri Swamy, that he has renounced clothes altogether, and only dons a loin-cloth on sufferance when females are of the party. So after due allowance of time we enter, and find his holiness with the minimum of costume, but exceedingly affable and courteous. His person is scrupulously clean, and his high-cheeked, clear-cut

undoubtedly is the richer by more than mere autographs from his receptions.

But it is time to leave the gharry and the narrow streets, and to make our way to the water's edge; for the right way—the only way to really see Benares—is from the river. Down one of the many broad flights of steps on the bank, we direct our course. These stairs are called "ghâts," and are built for the use of the pilgrims come to bathe in Mother Ganges, the River of Life; and truly they are well patronised. Up and down them pass every day and all day long, the mighty crowd of men and women come from hundreds and thousands of miles away to wash away their



BENARES. BURNING GHAT

face, is clever and intellectual to a degree. We are quite proud to shake hands with him, and to write our names in the gigantic autograph book which is his delight and pride; and we are flattered when he bestows a red rose on each of us. The specially god-like trait about this saint is, we are informed, that he will receive no money from his visitors, and to offer it him is to offend him very highly. But it is not to be supposed on that account that the annas in the pockets of his guests will remain untaxed. There is a very stern janitor at the gate, and though Sri Swamy may not actually handle the coin, yet he

sins in the turbid flood beneath the steps. There they are, rich and poor, young and old, laving their bodies, their faces, their hands, in that mixture of mud, refuse, dead flowers and filth, that borders the town. They are washing their clothes in it, they are rinsing their cooking pots, they are drinking it, worshipping it, carrying off little vessels of it to bear to far distant homes. We see them better when we have embarked in one of the crazy native barges, and sit in dilapidated wicker chairs on the deck, idly floating down the stream.

On the bank rise, block above block, the thousands of temples sacred to the

worship of the mud god, the rain god, the elephant god, the goddess of small-pox, the terrible Siva, and Kali, his yet more terrible spouse, the benignant Vishnu, all the deities of the teeming Hindu mythology. Most of the buildings, none of them imposing, are old and decayed, some near the margin have subsided deeply into the mud, and their leaning walls are half beneath the water. Upon the steps are numbers of large straw umbrellas, fastened on the slant, to shield those going in and out of the water from the scorching sun. There is much splashing, shouting, braying of instruments, and general animation, and the whole sun-illuminated scene is bright and curious and infinitely picturesque.

But suddenly the boat rounds a corner and the scene changes. A dense smoke is rising from some brightly blazing fires, burning in a little gully by the river's brink. A pungent smell is wafted across the water. About the fires stand a number of attendants, feeding the flames and stirring the logs to make them consume the faster. A few indifferent spectators are grouped around. The boat stops, the rowers rest on their oars. What are the fires for, and what are those three or four white objects lying in the water? Presently the men who have been arranging a new pile of wood advance and raise one. There is a ghastly resemblance in the shrouded object; there is terrible significance in the stiffened outline. We shudder involuntarily, as the awful thing is placed upon the pyre, and the flames lap round it. The attendant stirs the heap, and there rises from the fire a human hand!

Sickened and faint, we turn our heads away, and urge the callous oarsmen to row us quickly from this nightmare scene, and from the sight of a yet more terrible heap that is lying on the top of a neighbouring pillar, very quiet and motionless. It looked at first sight like a heap of sticks, but it seems to us now to resemble a man. But such a man! A heap of bones, a brown skeleton, an indescribably emaciated frame, a sight to shudder at and dream of, and so terribly still. How comes it there? Why does it lie there all alone, no one

near it to help or tend it? The guide is very indifferent. He says it is a man who has come to die in the Holy City, and because the dread angel has yet delayed his summons has lain there on the pillar and starved himself to death. He is not dead yet, but doubtless he will be very soon, and then he too will be wrapped in a white winding sheet and placed in the water while his fire is prepared for him. Then they will burn him as they are burning the others, and his ashes will be scattered on the broad bosom of Mother Ganges, who will bear his soul away to the rest he desires.

But we have seen enough by now, too much indeed, and we seek the landing stage again. The sun has set behind the temples, the swift Indian twilight is passing apace. Grey mist rises from the river and creeps up the long flights of steps. The death fires flicker brighter, and throw up sparks into the darkening sky. Dim lights appear in the temples, and from the banks suddenly arises a deafening and hideous uproar of tuneless drums, conches and horns. It is "music for the river," we are told; a sort of evening hymn to the sacred flood that is seeking the ocean many a hundred miles away, and bearing on its breast, as it has these thousands of years, the offerings, the prayers, and the ashes of a strange and mighty people.

* * * *

A different day; a different scene. The same bright sun, and the same pale blue sky, but the air is sharp and keen and invigorating, and furs and overcoats have taken the place of lightest summer dress. The interminable plains, the dusty fields, the broad sluggish river, have gone, and in place behold the mountains piling peak above peak around, their summits lost in the very clouds, while beneath, the fertile valley descends in green clad slopes and winding terraces, thousands of feet, to brawling streams below. Instead of the crowded, stifling city, a pleasant village of gay bungalows with roofs of corrugated iron gleaming in the sun, perch themselves in nooks and corners, crowning the summits of the lower hills, clinging to ledges and crevices of the higher. Not a level spot to be seen in the whole panorama,

not a barren patch to be distinguished on the dark green country, while in the background, soaring high up into the western sky, forty miles away, but apparently within grasp, a snow-white range of glistening peaks, heavenly in their beauty, dazzling in their purity, awful in their majesty, the highest mountains of the world, the loftiest range of the Himalayas.

spots on earth. The railway journey alone from the steaming heat of Calcutta, that stifling City of Palaces, to the pure mountain breezes of 8,000 feet above, is a journey in fairyland. The quaint, squat little engine and its long trail of toy carriages is a sort of magic train, as unlike the common-place, every-day locomotive as the wonderful flying horse of the Arabian Nights was



DARJEELING

The dark green vegetation on the hill-side, on nearer inspection, reveals itself as hundreds of square acres of neatly planted tea bushes, for this is Darjeeling, household word of all, though to how many the name brings no association beyond the grocers' price list. But once at Darjeeling and the tea seems but a small part of the interest and beauty of surely one of the fairest

unlike the ordinary equine animal. Who ever before has known a train that ties its course into loops as it goes? that proceeds in zig-zags up impossible gradients, first backwards and then forwards. That during its whole run of seven hours imagines itself a serpent and proceeds in a course of sinuous wriggles, so that you may sit in your compartment and look, not only at the



A DANDY



SOME INHABITANTS OF DARJEELING

engine, but at your friends in the next carriage ahead of you, first out of one window and then out of the other, the whole time !

As a result of clinging like a limpet to the side of a rock, the little town of Darjeeling is perforce obliged to dispense with ordinary vehicular traffic. No horse living would be capable of dragging carts and carriages up those terrific hills. So your baggage is conveyed on the backs of sturdy female porters, by means of a strap passed over their foreheads, as the Cornish fishwives carry their baskets, and you yourself, if you do not ride or walk, are pushed and pulled by three grinning natives in that glorified Bath chair known as a 'Rickshaw,' or carried on the shoulders of four in a tasteful article yclept a "Dandy," a sort of hybrid between a large coffin and a

small boat, and combining the advantages of both.

Then the people of these strange regions, how quaint they are and how varied. The Thibetans, with wild outlandish raiment, Chinese faces and enormous pig-tails. The plucky little Gurkhas, the Lepchas, Bhootans and Nepaulese, with their merry, ugly faces, their good-humoured expressions, their utterly nondescript garments, and ornaments studded with turquoise.

It is wonderful indeed how perfectly they harmonise with their surroundings, what an essential part they form of as curious and lovely a spot as the heart can desire, though not less wonderful that in the space of a thousand miles can be found as great a contrast in two cities as that presented by Darjeeling and Benares.





TIMBER YARD

Our Pianoforte

ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS



FAMILIARITY may not always, as the somewhat cynical proverb tells us it does, breed any feeling so strong as contempt, but it is certainly very apt to make us extremely indifferent to many things which really ought to arouse our strongest interest. The pianoforte, for instance; What do we really know about it? There it stands, in its handsome case of walnut or rosewood, forming an important part

of our drawing-room decoration, and occasionally, at the bidding of some expert performer, lifting those within hearing for a brief space out of this sordid work-a-day world into those regions where all is imaginative and ideal. But the thing itself is so familiar, that probably not one in a thousand of us ever asks how it came to be, or how much art, science, skill, discovery, and invention have been necessary to produce that which we take without thinking as a mere matter of course.

The pianoforte is not only *par excel-*

lence the instrument of the nineteenth century, but is also the only musical instrument which is peculiarly and distinctively European. We need not, therefore, be greatly surprised to find a crowd of claimants to the honour of being its first inventor. Germany advances a claimant, in the person of Christophe Gottlieb Schröter, who constructed the model of a new clavier in 1717; England proposes for the honour a monk named Father Wood, who made

finger-keys was certainly the organ, the credit of which is due, not to Saint Cecilia, but to one Guido Arentino, and may be dated, at least, as far back as A.D. 757. Then, in the early years of the fourteenth century, came the clavierium and the clavichord, both of which were in no long time superseded by the virginals. One of Queen Elizabeth's virginals is still in existence; it has 50 keys, and is 5 feet in length, 16 inches wide, 7 inches deep, and weighs



MILL ROOM

a pianoforte in 1711; and Italy sets forth her Bartolomeo Cristoforo, who appears to have invented a "piano e forte" as early as 1710. Without attempting to decide this international question, we may point out that the pianoforte, by whomsoever invented, is a development, on evolutionary lines, of previously existing instruments. The first keyed instrument was called a tamboura, but the first instrument with

24 pounds. After the virginals came the spinet, a very similar instrument, of which the curious in such matters may see many excellent specimens in the South Kensington Museum. And following the spinet came the harpsichord, an instrument never exceeding five octaves in compass, but with which such great composers as Handel, Bach, Beethoven, Haydn, and Mozart were, for the greater part of their lives, enforced

to be content. The harpsichord-makers, however, endeavoured to make their instruments suitable for orchestral compositions, and in their endeavour to do this the pianoforte, as we know it to-day, was, in essentials, evolved. Of course, the earliest pianos, compared with the almost perfect instruments which are now to be obtained, were feeble and clumsy productions. The first upright grand was an extremely unwieldy thing, and the first cabinet piano, invented in 1807, was close upon six feet in height. It was not until 1811 that the first "cottage" piano appeared, and even that was between four and five feet high, be-

the Guildhall School of Music, and various conservatoires of music throughout Europe and Australia, the reader who wishes to obtain a good idea of how a modern first class instrument is made, could not do better than pay a visit to this firm's extensive manufacturing premises in Kentish Town. In these works are to be found as elaborate a plant of up-to-date machinery, as varied a stock of various kinds of valuable timber, and as complete an army of workmen, skilled and experienced in every branch of their artistic trade, as can be shown by any establishment in the world.



GRAND BELLING SHOP

sides being almost prohibitively expensive. A new era commenced, however, in 1835, when John Brinsmead, founder of the now world-renowned firm of John Brinsmead & Sons, of London, began to make good and comparatively small pianos at a moderate price.

As Mr. John Brinsmead has received the unique distinction of the Cross of the Legion of Honour for the excellence of his pianos, and as his firm make many of those which are to be found in the Royal Palaces of Europe, on board of our magnificent P. and O. Steamers, and in such places as the Royal Academy of Music, the Royal College of Music,

It is obvious that wood must play a very important part in piano-making, but the visitor may not be altogether prepared to see quite so enormous a stock of timber as is piled up in the wood-yards, and stacked on the roofs of some of the buildings at Kentish Town. Still less will he have been able to realise how varied are the kinds of wood which the manufacture requires, and to obtain which almost the whole round world must have been ransacked. Here is beech from our own Surrey hills, oak from the United States, cedar from the Philippine Islands, pine from Switzerland and New Zealand, peduk

from Borneo, satin-wood from Ceylon, mahogany from Honduras, rosewood from Rio Janeiro, and great burrs cut from old walnut trees in the ancient forests of Persia. And it will probably be a further surprise to learn that nearly all this wood—and there are three-quarters of a million feet of it!—requires to be bleached, or dried, or hardened, indoors and out, for three to five years before it is in fit condition for the piano-maker's purposes.

After going through its lengthened period of probation out of doors and in the drying rooms, the wood then finds its way into the saw-mills, where it is

as sheets of writing paper, or reduce to one level the edges of a dozen or more pine boards at a single operation. Mouldings, and the carved parts of legs, keyboards, etc., are similarly cut out of the solid wood by a band-saw, according to a marked pattern, although such parts as these are afterwards carefully finished off by hand.

Many of the wooden parts of the interior of a piano are formed of several layers of wood, glued together, and placed so that the grain runs in various directions, thus giving them greater durability and power of resistance to the strain they must be subjected to, as



STRINGING ROOM

cut up into various sizes and shapes, according as it may be destined for part of an outside case, or for some part of the innumerable divisions of the internal mechanism. There is, of course, great economy of labour, as well as great exactness of execution, in having all the preliminary shaping of the wood done by machinery. A circular saw splits up huge logs of hard chestnut wood with as much apparent ease as one can slice an apple; a planing machine, going at the rate of 5,000 revolutions a minute, will then turn out a number of these rough pieces of wood as smooth

well as enabling them to defy the power of various climatic conditions such as would probably warp the strongest piece of any one solid wood. Wreath-planks, for instance, are made of layers of the hardest beech and spruce glued together, while a sounding-board, or what the piano maker calls a "belly," is composed of about thirty separate pieces of wood, and is a marvel of constructional ingenuity. One finds glue in perpetual use in almost every room throughout the factory. Each piece of wood is carefully warmed in a hot cupboard before any gluing takes place,

and is then subjected to great pressure so that every particle which does not penetrate the natural pores of the wood is forced out.

Important as wood is, however, it is by no means the only constituent of a modern piano. If its "belly" is always made of wood, its "back" is always nowadays made of iron. This iron back, which is the string frame, not only varies according to the size or style of piano it is intended for, but is made according to various principles of construction. The usual form of iron frame is so cast as to allow of the insertion of a wooden "wrest-plank," for the holding

the other. With this continuous frame, the wires are carried through the iron in a straight line, and receive their necessary tension by a direct pull from the top, instead of from pegs at right-angles to the frame and wires, as in the other form of frame. There is also an ingenious screw-and-nut arrangement, allowing the wires to be tightened or loosened with the thumb and finger, which must be a great boon to many a performer, especially in certain outlying foreign parts, where tuners' visits are like those of the proverbial angels, few and far between.

Of course there is a great deal more



FINISHING SHOP

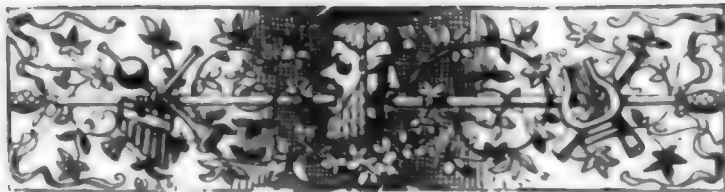
of the strings. But the Brinsmeads make a special kind of iron frame, which they patented in 1881, in which the wooden wrest-plank is discarded, and the entire frame is cast in one solid piece of iron. The value of this invention is twofold. In the first place it gives greater strength to a part of the instrument which is subjected to a very great strain—the strain of the strings of an upright grand being equal to a pressure of some twenty tons or more—and in the second place it renders possible a new and simplified method of tuning, which is another Brinsmead invention, and the direct outcome of

in the construction of a good piano than can possibly be set forth within the limits of a magazine article, and, naturally, much of it would only be intelligible to experts, although the results, as regards purity of tone and facility of executive performance, are very evident to the musical amateur. There is the "Perfect-Check-Repeater Action," for instance, which enables the softest touch to secure a reply, with the key held down to within one-eighth of its depth, and which gives a perfectly even, smooth and sensitive repetition touch. And there is the quite recent invention of "Triplex Sounding

Bars," which are so grooved out as to give a freer vibration, and enhanced sustaining power.

The vital points of a piano are the "belly," or sounding-board; the "back," or string-frame; and the action. The case, although by no means an unimportant part of the instrument, regarded either from the point of durability or of artistic effect, should never be taken—as we fear it too often is—as the sole criterion of merit. An inferior piano in a handsome case is rather like the well-dressed *nouveau riche* of whom it was said that he never opened his mouth without putting his foot in it. After the "back" and "belly" of a piano have been put together, and its strings fitted in, it is clothed with whatever kind of case may have been designed for it. Then, having had its actions adjusted,

it begins to go through a long series of tunings. When it comes to what is termed the "fly finishing floor," every part is separately polished, and the whole instrument hinged up. After this, it passes on to a certain room where it receives so microscopical an examination that the Brinsmeads' workmen have nicknamed the place the "Chamber of Horrors." Not unless a piano can pass this examination without one bad mark is it considered fit to send up to the show-rooms at Wigmore Street. As the factory—which has thus been briefly described—is capable of turning out three thousand first-class pianos annually, we may surely congratulate ourselves that in this important industry, at any rate, whatever the pessimists may say, we English are yet a very long way from being beaten out of time.



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THE FIRST PRIZE OF £2

HAS BEEN WON BY

Mr. F. W. MATTHEWS, 9, Commercial Road, Hayle, Cornwall.

You are fond of physical exercise, out-of-door life, and probably go in for sports in some form or other. You appreciate ease, have a vivid imagination, good sequence of ideas, and would invariably reason all the ins and outs of a question thoroughly before coming to any definite decision. You are generous, kind-hearted, have an impatient temper, are cheerful, ambitious, and sanguine of success.

THE SECOND PRIZE OF £1

HAS BEEN WON BY

**Mrs. LOUISA MUTLOW WILLIAMS, 212, Portsdown Road,
 Maida Vale, W.**

You are always ready to enter into and sympathise with the trials and troubles of those around you, and to help them in any possible way. You are fond of children and animals, and of all the surrounding influences of your home life. You have generally plenty to say for yourself, are probably skilful with your needle, and are a clever and capable manager in the household affairs. You have keen powers of observation, are inclined to look on the dark side of life, or else are not very strong.

THE THIRD PRIZE OF 10s.

HAS BEEN WON BY

Miss G. AMBROSE, 12, Cornwallis Terrace, Hastings.

THE will is firm, and you would generally manage to obtain that upon which you have set your mind. You are kind-hearted, and are always ready to interest yourself in the affairs of those around you, and to spend your money on others. You have a bright, hopeful nature, and invariably make the best of your troubles. The temper, though hasty, is never lasting.



ILLUSTRATED BY LOUIS NIGHT

THE season at Totland Bay was over. A week of wet, stormy weather at the end of September had driven nearly all the guests away, and the hotel was deserted save for the presence of four persons: a deaf, elderly lady and her golf-loving husband; Miss De Lavigne, a remarkably pretty girl, whose calm self-possession seemed to belie her very youthful appearance; and Malcolm Cameron, a clever, hard-headed Scotch engineer.

He was taking a well-earned holiday after a spell of anxious, engrossing work, and, to the dismay of his family, he had elected to spend it here in this quiet nook, rather than join a lively party of friends in a tour up the Rhine.

The main reason for this unsociability was the feverish desire shown by his own people and their friends to see him "settled," "comfortably married," and the evident willingness on the part of more than one girl to assist him in this all-important matter.

From a worldly point of view he was decidedly eligible, for he had private means in addition to the good income he earned, and when he chose to unbend he could be a most agreeable companion.

Miss De Lavigne had arrived just before the general exodus, and he had hoped that she would take wing with the rest, but a week had passed and she showed no signs of moving. He was so tired of girls! His doting mother had long led him to regard all those in their own set as loving lassies whose imperfect existence he would crown with joy by the bestowal of his name and affections.

This girl, with the haunting eyes and gentle movements, did not, it is true, seem the least conscious of his existence, but still her presence there might lead to complications. He knew he had nothing to fear from the elderly couple who occupied a table near the fireplace in the dining-room, but it annoyed him to see this sweet, interesting face at the next table to his own chosen seat near the window.

He did not feel comfortable if he sat with his back to her, and yet if he turned the other way he found himself constantly watching her in a way that was wholly opposed to his principles. It seemed so foolish for these two young people to sit apart, in true British exclusiveness, without uttering a word, day after day, absorbed in the alternate consumption of meals and the contem-

plation of the grass-crowned cliffs, and the shipping crossing the bay.

He found himself wondering who she was, why was she there alone, and how long she was going to stay. He remembered the evening she had arrived, and how calmly she had walked into the dining-room through the assembled company, and had taken her place without the slightest shade of either embarrassment or aggressive assertion.

There was nothing of the "New Woman" about her, and as far he could see, she didn't even ride a bicycle! Malcolm had an old-fashioned aversion to the biking female, whether "rational" or otherwise.

October came in bright and sunny. Summer seemed to have returned to take a lingering farewell, clad in the rich hues of autumn.

Cameron spent his days out-of-doors, scouring the island on his bicycle, with his camera slung over his shoulder, studying nature mainly from the point of view of an amateur photographer.

Miss De Lavigne appeared to spend most of her time basking in the sun on the green overlooking the sea, or on the little terrace in front of the reading-room.

She looked pale and tired when she first came, but the pure, bracing air soon brought the colour to her cheeks,



AT ALUM BAY

and by degrees she, too, began to explore the neighbourhood.

One glorious afternoon she hired a pony-carriage and drove over to Alum Bay, and as she was making her way down the steep path leading to the shore, she caught sight of the lithe, muscular figure of the Scotchman before her. She stood for a moment to take in the view, and as she did so he turned round, quickly fixed his camera, and took a snap-shot.

Then, as an idea seemed to strike him, he retraced his steps, and taking off his cap, said courteously :

"I hope you will forgive my seeming rudeness, but I had set my camera before I recognised you, and the picture was so charming I could not resist it."

She met his apology with a frank smile, and answered good-humouredly :

"One has to get used to that sort of thing now-a-days, and, to tell the truth, I was so absorbed in watching that steamer that I didn't notice what you were doing."

The perfect candour of this remark made Malcolm feel as if he had been a fool for his pains, but as the ice was broken, he decided to make himself agreeable.

"This is my first visit to these wonderful cliffs," she said as they walked along the pebbly beach ; "and they are certainly marvellous. Just look at the colours with the sun on them. I must be like the children and take home some of the sand."

"You can buy samples, arranged in fearful and wonderful designs inside glass bottles, from the coastguards near the pier," he said.

"Oh, but I'd rather get some for myself," was her laughing reply, and she began scrambling about with girlish enthusiasm. Malcolm soon found himself climbing up to get specimens that were beyond her reach.

She was a delightful companion, and met him on easy terms of comradeship that were totally free from any suspicion of design or coquetry, so that he felt quite safe.

"The best view is to be got from the sea, you know," he said when the sand hunt was over. "I want to take some

photos, and shall be very pleased if you will come too."

"Yes, that would be charming. I've been longing to go on the water ever since I came, but it is rather poor fun by oneself."

"By the way, how did you come over here? I never saw you on the road."

"I drove in the hotel pony cart, and the boy is waiting all this time! I told the poor thing that I would only be half-an-hour."

"I rode up on my machine, but if you're a fairly good walker, and would allow me to send my cycle back in the trap, we might walk home along the cliffs. It's lovely there when the sun's setting."

"That's a brilliant idea. We'll go up to the farm and have tea, and send back the impedimenta," she said, entering readily into the impromptu programme.

After tea they made their way to the little pier, at the end of which they took a boat and were rowed up and down in the afternoon sun, which made the Needles stand out like gold-tipped pillars of alabaster, and lighted up the many-hued cliffs till they looked like a huge mass of opal.

The photos were a failure, but Malcolm did not seem to mind that in the enjoyment of his companion's society. She still mystified him a little, but she was perfectly charming.

"You don't cycle, I think?" he asked as they were walking home.

"No. I am one of the few exceptions."

"One of the blessed exceptions. I can't bear to see women on bicycles," he said warmly.

"Oh, I don't abstain from principle, or prejudice, as most people would call it. I should love it, I know, only I'm afraid of spoiling my hands," she said rather regretfully.

His face fell, and so did his opinion of her. What miserable vanity! He would almost rather have an out-and-out unaffected cyclist.

She watched him with some amusement, and then went on quietly :

"You see I am a violinist, and anything that spoils the delicacy of touch

or the flexibility of the wrist must be avoided. Cycling might not do any harm, but I have my way to make in my profession, and can't afford to run any risks for the sake of mere amusement."

The quiet dignity with which this was said made Malcolm heartily ashamed of his passing unworthy thought.

"Forgive me, I understand," he said quickly. "Now I know why your name is so familiar to me. I have often seen it in print."

She flushed with pleasure, and raising her eyes to his, asked:

"Are you fond of music? You look as though you ought to be."

"My hard, practical line of life—engineering—does not leave much time for music and poetry," he answered evasively.

"But that need not be. See how Kipling has idealised machinery and that sort of thing in 'Mc Andrew's Hymn.' It was a revelation to me, for I had always thought it all so hopelessly unattractive."

He winced a little and said drily:

"Yes, it takes a genius to combine the prose and underlying poetry of life satisfactorily. As to music, I never realised what it might mean to some people till one day last spring. I was in Norwood on business, and strolled into the Palace while waiting for my train. There was a concert going on, and as I heard a Scotch song, I went in. The place was crammed, so I had to content myself with a seat from which I couldn't see the stage. The song was followed by a violin solo, and whatever it was, for I haven't the slightest idea, it stirred something within me that I had never felt before. The player was encored and gave Chopin's Second Nocturne which I have painful cause to know, as my sister is for ever strumming it on the piano."

"And how did it sound on the fiddle?" asked Stella with a gleam of excitement in her hazel eyes.

"It was a 'warld-liftin' joy' as Mc Andrew says," he replied, with one of his rare sweet smiles.

"That was on March the 12th, and the violinist begs to thank you for one of the most genuine tributes to her

playing that she ever received," she said impulsively, holding out one of her delicate, artistic little hands.

He caught it in both his strong ones, saying: "Was it you? Really *you*? Then I am happy to have found my unknown enchantress!"

The sun was setting in glorious splendour, changing the sea from purple to crimson, from crimson to gold, till the glow gradually faded and only a track of glory showed where the golden disc had disappeared behind a bank of purple clouds.

Stella told Malcolm of her early struggles and aspirations, how she had studied in Paris, then in Berlin under the great Joachim himself, and how she had just completed a successful engagement in London.

"I was in Edinburgh for some weeks last year, and made lots of friends. Your countrypeople are most hospitable. What you say about music reminds me of a very nice man I knew there. He only cared for Scotch airs, and though he would look bored to extinction at Beethoven or Chopin, his eyes would glisten with pleasure if you struck up 'Bonnie Dundee' or 'My Heart's in the Highlands.' Poor Fergusson!" she said, half to herself.

"Not Donald Fergusson?" asked Malcolm.

"Yes; Donald Fergusson, the lawyer. Do you know him?"

"He's one of my oldest friends."

From that day Stella de Lavigne and Malcolm Cameron saw a good deal of each other. He moved to her table, and their acquaintance ripened rapidly. The deaf lady became most interested, and the waiter was ready to lay heavy odds on the issue.

At the end of a week, in her usual letter to her mother, Stella wrote: "You need not be afraid of Mr. Cameron interfering with my career. We are excellent friends, and he is a pleasant companion, but he is far too matter-of-fact to think of falling in love, and even if he did, my profession is all in all to me; my fiddle will always hold the first place in my heart."

Cameron had told his friend Donald of his strange meeting with Miss de Lavigne, at the end of a business letter

he was forced to write. He found himself mentally contrasting her with the various girls who had been pointed out to him as suitable wives. He supposed he should marry one of them some day. He did not want any very exciting experiences in the way of love-making, but it would be nice, perhaps, to have a pretty little wife to welcome him home and save him from the clutches of extortionate landladies. Still there was plenty of time for that. He was only thirty, and meantime he was having a real holiday from work and match-makers alike, and was free to enjoy the society of the nicest girl he had ever met. She was totally unlike his preconceived notions of lady professionals.

There was no attempt to pose, she was not unkempt or slovenly. Her simple coats and skirts were as neat and trim as the most fastidious could desire, and if her evening dresses were different to other people's it was in the fact that they were infinitely more graceful.

Her manner had an ease and freedom to which he was unaccustomed in his sister's friends, but he felt it came from the fearlessness of innocence and self-respect, not from unwomanly forwardness.

He had settled in his mind one night that he would propose an expedition to Carisbrooke the next day, but when he came down he found that she had already started to meet some friends at Ryde, as the waiter informed him, so he had to eat his breakfast alone.

He was foolishly disappointed, and nothing went right with him that day. Stella did not come back to dinner; but when he was in the smoking-room he heard her saying to the deaf lady:

"Yes, thank you. I've had a lovely day. I haven't enjoyed anything so much for a long time."

"Humph!" he growled, "I wish I could say as much for myself. I begin to think that I'm a fool. I'll go off for a couple of days myself. Been too long in this quiet hole!"

The next morning he was in the act of starting when she came down.

"Hope you had a pleasant time yesterday?" he said jerkily. "I'm off for a couple of days to the other side of the Island. Good morning!"

"Good bye! Mind you bring back some nice photographs."

No sooner had he started than Cameron began to wish he might lose his train; but he called himself a few more homely and forcible names and decided to enjoy himself. On looking back he always declared that they were two of the dulllest, deadliest days he ever spent in his life, and came back thoroughly disgusted with his own society.

Stella was not much happier, but she attributed her restlessness to a longing for her beloved music, so at last she went off to Newport and hired the best instrument she could get. She shut herself in the large empty drawing-room and played; but the charm did not work, for once her art failed to soothe her. Her heart was still heavy, oppressed by a sense of loss, aching with an unsatisfied longing.

The morning after Cameron's return they greeted each other with a mutual gladness that neither cared to analyse.

She found a business letter awaiting her, and he had one from Donald Fergusson in which the following passage drove all else from his mind:

"So you are with Stella de Lavigne! I don't know whether to envy or pity you most, for of course you'll fall in love with her, no man could help it, and if you're fond enough to tell her so, she'll look at you with sweet pitying eyes and tell you gently that 'she's wedded to her Art.' My dear fellow, I've been there myself, and though it hit hard at the time, I have quite come to see that an artist is not the kind of wife for such work-a-day folk as you and I. We should not satisfy her, and she would not fit in with our ways. Take my advice, and if it's not too late, pull yourself up short."

Malcolm read and re-read this passage, and knew that his friend's advice had come too late. He felt it was all true, but, suitable or not, she was the one woman in the world for him! "Wedded to her Art. We should not satisfy her!" he repeated to himself. Yes, she was more artist than woman yet, but some day her love might be awakened; he would wait.

Her face was radiant with pleasure

when he at last roused himself and put the letter away.

"I have just had such good news. I am engaged to play at the Queen's Hall concerts this winter, and I begin next week."

"Wedded to her Art" rang in Malcolm's mind, and the joy in her eyes confirmed it.

"I congratulate you heartily. So our pleasant time here will soon come to an end," he said, with a touch of sadness in his voice.

"Yes, I am sorry. But it is high time I was at work again. My long holiday has begun to demoralise me. Do you know, I was so lost for my fiddle yesterday that I had to rush off and get a base substitute for it? I dared not bring my own, or I should have been playing instead of resting."

"Will you play to me before you go away?"

"Yes, gladly, only it won't sound like my dear old Strad.," she replied, lingering lovingly on the three last words.

The night before she left she played to him in the twilight, and though her instrument was inferior, all the pathos and ecstasy of a human soul seemed to fill the air by turns. Malcolm listened with his head in his hands lest his face should betray the strange emotion he felt. "'Wedded to her Art! We could not satisfy her!' True, pitilessly true!" he said to himself again and again.

When she had finished, and the last low note had died away, he got up and tried to thank her. Her eyes were dilated and shining, her whole form was vibrating with the passion of her artist's soul, and her fingers still caressed the strings from which she had drawn such sweet, bewildering sounds.

"You have a glorious gift, and it is no wonder that you love it above all else," were his last words to her that night.

"He would not listen, or understand! Though I played to him as I've never played before, to tell him my secret, to win a response from his heart!" she half sobbed to herself when she was alone. "Of course he would not love a mere violin-player, public property!

His Scotch ideas are too narrow, too stiff. He will marry some quiet, domesticated girl, who has been taught to cook and manage a house like a machine!" she said bitterly, brushing away the hot, blinding tears, as she thought of her own Bohemian bringing-up.

For the next two years Stella de Lavigne reigned as queen of the concert-room. Every one remarked how her playing had gained in depth of feeling, in pathos and passion; but none knew that it was the artist's own sorrow which found its only expression in her music. Many times she saw Malcolm Cameron among her audience, and then she played for him alone. It was the only intercourse possible between them, for he had never sought her out again after seeing her off at Yarmouth Pier.

One hot, thundery night, at the beginning of July, Stella was to play at St. James' Hall. She had not been feeling well for some days, and, but for her unwillingness to break an engagement, would have sent an excuse to the director. She nerved herself to appear, and got through her first solo with brilliant success. A storm of applause greeted the finish, and an "encore" was clamorously demanded.

"I can't possibly play again yet," she said to her accompanist. "I shall only bow."

When she returned to the stage, the applause redoubled; but, as she bowed her acknowledgments, her slender form swayed, all became dark before her eyes, and she would have fallen if some one from behind had not sprung forward and caught her in his arms.

When she recovered consciousness in the artists' room, it was to meet the anxious, loving gaze of Malcolm Cameron's deep blue eyes.

"Where were you? How did it all happen?" she asked with a strange feeling of rest and happiness.

"I had a seat behind you in the orchestra. I only came to town to-day, and when I saw you were to play here, I felt I must come. I wanted to be near you—to hear the rustle of your dress, to feel it brush my feet, perhaps, as you passed. Stella, do you know how I have been hungering for you these two weary



ST. JAMES'S HALL, LONDON

years? They have been full of triumph for you, but, dearest, this life is killing you. Let me take you from it, and love and shelter you as my wife?"

"It's not the life that has been killing me, dear, it was the want of love—your love, Malcolm. I should have died without my music. It was my only consolation."

"But why did you listen to Donald?" she asked when they were driving home, and she had heard her lover's story. "A lawyer is never disinterested in giving advice, and I believe he was jealous."

"I was a coward, I suppose. I

dreaded to hear the truth from your lips, and yet the suspense nearly drove me mad. The more I heard you courted and praised, the farther you seemed to recede beyond my prosaic sphere, and yet I went on hoping that something might happen to bring us together."

"And it *has*," she said, laying her hand in his. "It was cruel of you to doubt me so long, for I found out before I left Totland Bay, that even Art has to take the second place in a woman's heart when Love steps in."

His only answer was to press his lips to hers, and in that silent caress, the pain of the past was forgotten.

The Plantin Press

THE OLDEST PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT EXTANT

WRITTEN BY GEOFFREY RHODES. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS

ONE night about the year 1554, a celebrated Antwerp casket-maker was on his way to the house of the Secretary of King Philip II. of Spain, with a box he had made for that officer, when he was attacked and severely wounded by a party of drunken men who mistook him for a guitar-player, to whom they owed a grudge.

The artisan reached his home half-dead, and the two doctors called in at first despaired of saving his life; however, their efforts were successful, and the casket-maker did not die. But he was so hopelessly crippled that he was obliged to desist from all manual labour that entailed his moving about, or bending his body; he could no more chisel the designs on wood and leather that had made his fame. Forced thus to abandon his business as a casket-maker, he took up that of printing, in which trade he had once served an apprenticeship.

To show how far he succeeded in his new occupation, it is only necessary to say that the casket-maker was Christopher Plantin, the founder of the world-renowned Plantin Press.

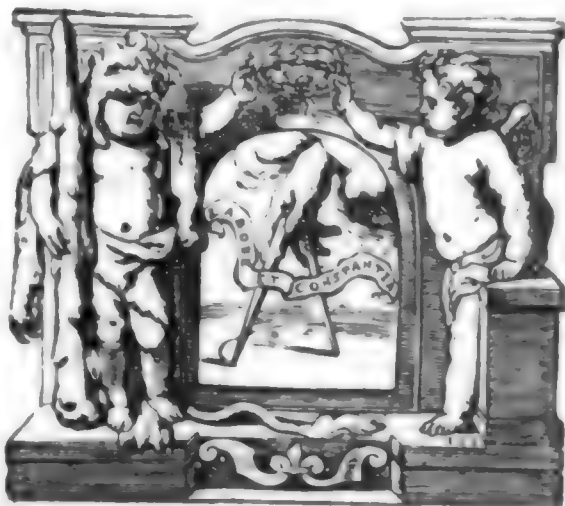
Having briefly outlined its origin, before proceeding to describe this famous typographical establishment, it is necessary to explain the difficulties under which a printer laboured in Plantin's time.

Printing from movable type was comparatively a new art (impressions from woodcuts were understood in Europe in the eleventh century), and for that reason alone would be jealously guarded, but the chief reason for the many restrictions put upon printing was the opportunity it offered for circulating illicit literature, published by the numerous secret religious and secular associations with which Europe was honey-combed. Whilst they had to be copied by hand, these societies could

necessarily issue few pamphlets, but with printing-presses at their disposal their field of operations was practically unlimited.

The important presses therefore confined themselves to printing Bibles, Missals, and the general literature of the orthodox Roman Catholic Church, reprints of the classics, and historical works by approved authors. New writers, unless they enjoyed the patronage of a high official of undoubted integrity, had no easy task to get their MSS. published. It says much for Plantin's foresight and business capacity that, amid rampant suspicion and the political disturbances that agitated Antwerp from time to time, on only one occasion was he obliged to close his works, and then he retired to Paris for a year.

The Plantin Press was unique in several ways, but more especially was it remarkable for having continued to exist and remain the property of the same family, through all the vicissitudes of civil and foreign wars that ravaged Antwerp, from the time of its foundation in 1555, till it was sold to the Belgian Government as a historic monument, in 1876.



TRADE MARK

Christopher Plantin's descendants added to, and altered, the original houses that comprised his offices and home, so extensively that if he were living to-day, he would scarcely recognise the buildings from the outside; inside the house, however, he would be welcomed by the sight of presses, types, books, and a hundred etceteras, with which he and his workmen were familiar.

All that archæological knowledge could suggest, and skilful workmen carry out, has been done to restore the interior to its original state when occupied by the crippled casket-maker and his family; and the thoroughness with which the work has been done may be perhaps best seen in the details—the restoring of the antique door and window fastenings, instead of the modern ones that had taken their place.

Every corner of this interesting building and every one of the objects within its walls is worthy of the closest scrutiny, but in the present instance it will only be possible to refer briefly to a few of the rooms and the printing plant.

The second saloon on the ground-floor is the most interesting of the living rooms. It contains twelve portraits in

oils of Plantin and his family, and scholars with whom he associated, by Peter Paul Rubens, besides many sketches in ink and wash by the same master. The prices paid for the portraits are on record. Rubens received a total of 38 florins (about £3 16s.) for painting the portraits of Plantin and his wife. These two pictures are shown side by side on the wall to the right of the doorway in the first photograph.

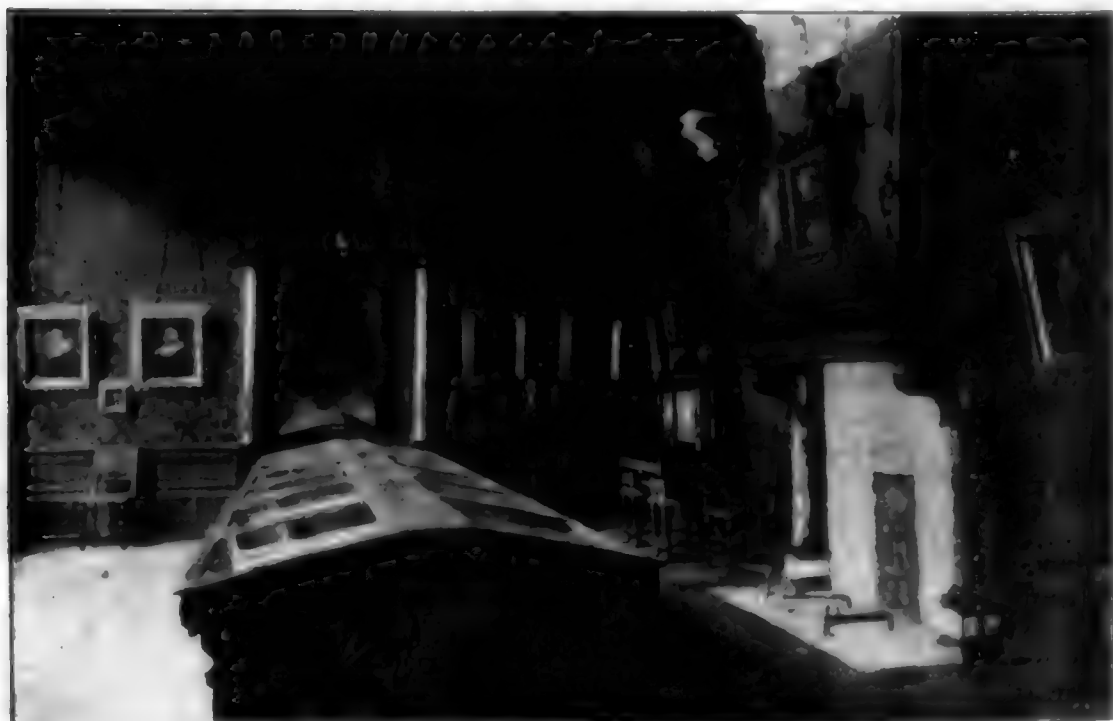
An interesting document is exhibited in the case in this room. It is Rubens' receipt for 600 florins for the picture ornamenting the sepulchral monument of John Moretus I.* in Antwerp Cathedral. It is in Flemish, as follows:—

"Ic onderscreven bekenne ontfanghen te hebben van S^r Balthasar Moretus de somme van seshondert guldens eens tot betalinghe van zijn vaders saligher epitaphium door mij geschildert. Tot bevestinghe der waerheyt hebbe dese quittance met mijn handt gescreven en onderteekent, desen 27 April, 1612.

Pietro Paulo Rubens."

("I the undersigned acknowledge having received from S^r Balthasar Moretus the sum of six hundred florins,

*Plantin's property descended to his son-in-law Moretus.



THE SECOND SALOON, WITH RUBENS PORTRAITS

in payment of his late father's epitaph painted by myself. In confirmation of the truth, I have written and signed in my handwriting, the present receipt on this 27th April, 1612.

Peter Paul Rubens.")

Passing through another room and crossing the courtyard, round which the house is built, one reaches the shop, for the business of printer then included that of publisher and bookseller.

The illustration gives a very good idea of the appearance of this *boutique*, with its leaded windows, counters, and heavily-laden shelves. The door shown

dark Cordova leather stamped with golden Arabesques. It is a typical living-room in a good sixteenth or seventeenth century house, and shows the simple grandeur of the decorations. Notice the small, thin, square oak shutters that guard the leaded and barred windows.

After traversing a lobby and a room for the storage of type, the printing office is reached. The two presses at the far end of the hall, deserve special attention as being the first presses Plantin worked. Printing was slow then (in 1555). The forme of type was first of all placed on a moveable shelf in front of the press, then



THE SHOP

open in the picture leads to the small office furnished with desk and stools, adjoining the shop, and where the clerical work immediately connected with the sales was transacted.

Two rooms further on is what we should now call the "readers' " room. The table in the centre is covered with bundles of proofs. This apartment contains the contemporary furniture and original chimney-piece, surmounted by a very ornamental stone bracket.

The room, called after the author Justus Lipsius, is pictured in the fourth photograph. The walls are hung with

after being carefully inked the sheet of paper was laid on it, the shelf pushed back under the upper plate of the press, the lever pulled round from right to left—or left to right as the case might be—thrust back to its original position, the shelf bearing the forme pulled out, and the paper lifted off. As soon as the ink was dry the process had to be repeated with another forme, to print on the reverse side of the sheet.*

Opposite the row of presses are the stands with the "lower" and "upper"

* In some special cases a process almost as slow as this is employed at the present day.

(small letters and capitals respectively) cases of type, which might for all the world be part of the equipment of a modern printing works. Attached to the sides of the upper frames of the presses may be seen the spherical leather inking pads, and by the side of each machine is an inclined desk for the wet impressions.

During nearly three centuries, from 1576 to 1865 printing went on in this actual room, which has preserved unaltered all its architectural ornamentation since the first-mentioned date.

Having visited the places where the

This room is on the first floor, and therefore handsome and lofty, but on mounting another flight of stairs one reaches the region of small chambers and low ceilings. The first to rivet the attention is a bed-room, so complete in every detail of decoration and arrangement that one feels as though one had been wafted backwards for three hundred years on the wings of time. It needs but water in the cwer and a towel on the washhandstand to make the illusion complete.

This room enjoys no direct light; such daylight as enters it is first filtered



THE READER'S ROOM

printing was carried out, there still remains the foundry, where the letters were designed, the moulds cut, and the type cast. This workshop is on the second floor, it contains all the original tools, the crucibles, forge, bellows, and glass-fronted cupboard of moulds.

Leaving the commercial section of the building, one returns to the residential part, which includes many fine apartments, one being the chief library—that also served as a chapel—where the most valuable of Plantin's ponderous volumes were stored.

through another apartment and then subdued by a stained-glass window. Most mediæval sleeping-chambers appear to have been planned in this way. But that is probably putting the cart before the horse; the reason, no doubt, was that the dark rooms in odd corners that seem to have been unavoidable in the domestic architecture of the Middle Ages, were utilised as bedrooms.

There is much to admire and interest in the home arrangements of the Plantin family, and it does not tax the imagination very severely to picture the human beings



THE JUSTUS LIPSIIUS SALOON

who passed their lives amid these surroundings, who slept in these beds and sat on these chairs.

As already mentioned, the Press continued the property of, and was worked by Plantin's descendants until the middle of the present century. The following translation gives a concise history of the establishment and an account of the work it undertook during the years following Christopher Plantin's decease:—

"After the death of his father-in-law, John Moretus continued the Plantin printing office. He followed the footprints and respected the traditions of his predecessor. The works he executed are as well elaborated as Plantin's. Nevertheless, under his direction, the number of books printed yearly greatly diminished, and their importance was much inferior to the editions of the founder of the office. The classical authors and scientific books disappeared altogether, to make room for works of devotion, ecclesiastical history, and ancient philology.

"John Moretus I., born on May 22nd, 1543, died on September 22nd, 1610. As Plantin had wished the printing office at Antwerp, with all its materials,

to become the property of his son-in-law, so as to give himself a worthy successor, even so the latter, in conjunction with his wife, assigned their sons Balthasar and John heirs to the buildings and materials of the office, and continuers of the firm founded by their grandfather. He stipulated in his will, that, failing his two eldest sons, the printing office should pass, entirely, into the hands of those of their children or relations whom the family would consider most worthy. This clause acquired force of law for their descendants, and was repeated in the wills of all their successors during centuries; it remained a kind of majorat, and the cause of the marvellous conservation of treasures of all sorts accumulated by Plantin and by the successive proprietors of the printing office.

"Balthasar and John Moretus II., the former of whom was born in 1574, the latter in 1576, helped their father after 1592. John died in 1618, and Balthasar entered into partnership with John van Meurs the same year. This partnership ended in 1629. From 1610 until 1641, the year of his death, Balthasar Moretus I. was in truth the chief of the Plantin house. He was a man of uncommon knowledge, and of high intelligence. Al-

though entirely paralysed on the right side, he displayed an indefatigable activity, and became the most illustrious of the Moretus family. He knew how to give a new impetus to the concern, and the office was, under his direction, nearly as illustrious as during the life of Plantin. He had large additions made to, and repairs effected in the paternal house. In 1638, he annexed to the printing establishment the shop, which had remained separated up to that time. Being connected with a large number of eminent men, and with the most celebrated artists of his time, he got Rubens to paint portraits of members of his family and of learned men, which still adorn the Plantin-Moretus Museum.

"His successor was the son of his brother, John Balthasar II.; he was born in 1615, and died in 1674. This was the last of the Moretuses who produced any editions worthy of being mentioned. After him, the privilege of printing religious works chiefly occupied the attentions of the proprietors of the press. Besides the publishing of the Missals and Breviaries, the Moretuses continued, up to 1705, to print the ordinances and placards of the town of Antwerp; and being rich already,

they did not undertake, beyond these two kinds of lucrative work, a single task which might have caused annoyance or exposed them to run pecuniary risks. When, in 1662, Balthasar Moretus II. made the inventory of his possessions, he ascertained with satisfaction that his fortune already amounted to 341,000 florins, or about two millions of francs.

"Balthasar II. was succeeded by his son Balthasar III., born in 1646, who died in 1696. He was created a nobleman by the King of Spain, in 1692, and obtained the privilege of exercising the trade of printer without derogation to the nobility.

"Balthasar III. was succeeded by his son, Balthasar IV., born 1679, who died in 1730; his younger brother, John James Moretus (1690-1757), managed the printing office after him. His eldest son, Francis John (1717-1768), succeeded to his father, and had a large building constructed (1761-1763), fronting the Vrijdagmarkt (Friday market), in place of the small houses, which up to that time had stood before the ancient printing-office. His wife, Mary Theresa Josephine Borrekens, managed the business up to the day of her death, the 5th of May, 1797. Their four sons,



THE PRINTING OFFICE



THE FOUNDRY

James Paul Joseph (1756-1808), Lewis Francis Xavier (1758-1820), Francis Joseph Thomas (1760-1814), and Joseph Hyacinth (1762-1810), managed it together after the death of their mother. In 1820, Albert Francis Hyacinth Frederick (1795-1865), son of Joseph Hyacinth, succeeded to the last survivor of the three uncles. His younger brother, Edward John Hyacinth (1804-1880), who succeeded to him, sold the printing office, with the buildings belonging thereto, the material, and the art collections, to the town of Antwerp in 1876.

"The last Plantin printing dated is of 1866; nevertheless, the Moretuses continued working up to 1867. The last patent paid by them as typographers dates from 1871."

With our nineteenth century job-work, jerry-building, and spurious manufactures, one derives a good deal of pleasure from the contemplation of mediæval handicrafts. There is something fascinating about the completeness of an establishment like the Plantin Press.

Within a single building the wealthy tradesman lives as befits his position, and carries on his business in a manner to maintain his reputation. Above all, he is "thorough" in everything. His

craft is printing. He engages the cleverest designers from Paris, and places at their disposal workmen to make steel dies from the artists' drawings. These moulds are handed on to a smith and his assistants in an adjoining chamber, whose duty it is to take casts from these dies, and then see that they are carefully stored for future use. The finished type is taken from the foundry, and given over to the men in charge of the store-rooms, who, in their turn supply the compositors with new or different type, as they may require. These set up the MS. as it is given them, and fix it in the formes. The workmen in charge of the machines take an impression, which is submitted to the readers, and, when passed by them, the printing is proceeded with. The dry sheets are handed over to another department to be bound, and are then consigned to the charge of the librarian, who, again, has to cope with the demands of the shopmen. The latter, when accosted by a customer, have to see that the volume asked for has not just been vetoed by law; or if it is a novel, must refer and see what is the fixed Government charge for the book. The transaction duly finished, the money is passed on to the counting-house, and so on and so on.

Some Northern Health Resorts:

ROUND HARROGATE, ILKLEY, AND BEN RHYDDING

WRITTEN BY ARTHUR HALLAM. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS

BRITISH inland health resorts are regarded by many as dull, uncongenial places, in comparison with Homburg, Baden, Aix Le Bains, and other continental spas; yet how often is it the lack of appreciative faculty, or the air of importance one can assume on returning from "a trip on the Continent," which renders a good many Englishmen incapable of enjoying a holiday in their own land? Leamington, Cheltenham, Bath, and Tunbridge Wells have lost much of their early significance since the introduction of continental tours, reduced fares and special travelling facilities; still, it is interesting to know that England is not entirely devoid of popularity in this respect, for in Harrogate, Ilkley, and Ben Rhydding, chiefly the former, not only our own countrymen but many Europeans find elements productive of considerable benefit to their health, and a reasonable amount of harmless enjoyment. Harrogate, in fact, seems to be superseding all the old English watering places, its interminable supply of mineral aperients having been mainly instrumental in establishing its ascendancy over several of its historic predecessors.

Popular, however, as it is to-day amongst those whose keen desire for perfect health has induced them to give it a trial, and who, in consequence, are now in the habit of paying the town periodical visits, there are numberless people still unacquainted with its virtues,

who, the moment they are run down in health, fly with great haste to the Continent, simply to secure that which they could have obtained at home. It is to this class of patrons that our northern health resorts more particularly appeal, and as the number of their visitors gradually increases year by year, it is evident that their reputation is becoming more generally known.

From Easter to the beginning of October Harrogate affords most excellent scope to the student of expression, the close observer of individuality, or to any one devoted to the study of life from the fashionable, artistic, and worldly aspects. The best time for the caricaturist is in the early morning, when visitors of high rank and various nationalities may be seen partaking of the mineral waters upon which the fame of Harrogate principally rests. Although in the district there are no less than eighty known springs, all differing in strength and quality, there are few which can be said to possess an agreeable flavour; and, strange as it may seem, the one in greatest demand and the most effective in operation, is the one most difficult to relish. This is the sulphur water, and the famous old Pump Room from which it is dispensed is, from 7 a.m. until midday, the rallying ground of all the fashion, beauty, wit, real invalidism and imaginary invalidism of the town. It is often extremely amusing to notice the impression made upon the newcomer by this extraordinary aperient, as

can well be imagined from the precise description of it given in the following verse:—

Of rotten eggs, brimstone and salts, make a hash,

And 'twill form something like this delectable mash,

Nothing else in this world, I will wager a pasty,
So good in effect, ever tasted so nasty.

The true method is to blend the consumption of these medicinal waters with a course of walking. And here comes in one of the great advantages of what is known as the "Stray," a common

land five hundred feet above the level of the sea, it stands midway between the German Ocean and the Irish Channel, its air having the invigorating freshness of both. Within a few minutes' walk of the Pump Room you may trudge through heather-clad moorland, overlooking an illimitable stretch of fairest England, or you may ride, drive, cycle, or fish, play bowls, lawn tennis, golf, cricket, and lacrosse, or indulge in the many other forms of pastime for which innumerable facilities are given. What with the waters, the baths, the bracing



OLD SULPHUR WELL, HARROGATE

some two hundred acres in extent, round which the principal residences are built. Over the greensward of this old-time forest-land every one has a right to walk or ride, and as it is throughout either level or only gently undulating, it is well adapted to the strolling of invalids and water drinkers in general. Many, however, prefer to wander in the Valley Gardens or the ornamental grounds of the Royal Spa, where they can daily listen to the music of the Corporation, Volunteer, or Temperance bands.

But Harrogate is a place for the hale as well as the sick. Perched on table-

air, the walks, the excursions, the entertainments, the bands, and the many and varied attractions of the town generally, the visitor must be very "down" indeed if he cannot contrive to pick up both health and enjoyment at Harrogate.

The four-in-hand coach is a vehicle much favoured by visitors to the town, for by it excursions can be made to the many romantic and picturesque places of interest in the surrounding districts. Fountains Abbey, Brimham Rocks, Pateley Bridge, Nidderdale, Harewood, Ribston Park, and all the other charming adjuncts of Harrogate are regularly



SURPRISE VIEW, FOUNTAINS ABBEY

visited in the season by this form of public conveyance, the drive to Fountains being, perhaps, the most popular. On the way thither the tourist may enjoy the satisfaction of becoming acquainted with Lord Ripon's beautiful park and pleasure grounds of Studley Royal, which lie distant from Harrogate some fourteen miles; while he is also afforded an opportunity of inspecting the picturesque ruins of the famous Abbey of Fountains, which are said to comprise the noblest ecclesiastical remnant in the kingdom.

Of course, visitors to Harrogate rarely omit going to Knaresborough, the most romantic of English market towns. It is only three miles distant by road, and its great antiquity, which proved so fascinating to the genius of Turner, as expressed in the great master's drawing of the old Rhine-like town, is of a character extremely diversifying. As you approach this once famous Roman fortress you gradually become more and more sensible of the quaint originality which it has somehow managed to retain. Indeed, from a first acquaintance it would seem that the town was totally unconscious of the revolutionary pro-

gress and improvement going on around it, so stately and unimpaired do its ancient thoroughfares and buildings remain. Apart from the Castle, now a mass of crumbling ruins, Knaresborough possesses a host of exceptionally curious objects. The first in importance is the Dropping Well, the most remarkable spring known in Great Britain. Situated in what is known as the Long Walk, and close to a part of the river's course where the intermixed charms of rock, wood, and water, combine to render the scene one of great beauty, the tourist may, whilst wending his way to this noted spring, enjoy that sequestration and repose which, according to local tradition, proved so fascinating to that celebrated Yorkshire sibyl, Mother Shipton. The water rises a short distance above a picturesque limestone cliff, over the further extremity of which it trickles, and its extraordinary power of petrification or encrustation is amply illustrated by the fact that such articles as gloves, sponges, hats, birds' nests, stockings, or small animals and birds will, after a few months' immersion, become masses of corrugated stone. Suspended in front of the rock are to be

seen articles similar to the above in course of petrification, while specimens are always obtainable at the museum adjoining the well.

Mother Shipton is reported to have been born near the Dropping Well in July, 1488, and here is still shown the cave in which she is said to have worked her charms, composed her rhymes, divined her mysterious prophecies, and told credulous folk their fortunes.

To those interested in quaint old architecture Knaresborough should have many charms, for here are still existent several specimens of what may be regarded as

same as that of the cavern dwellers of Israel in the time of Moses and Joshua.

Should you chance to come across one of the old inhabitants of Knaresborough you have only to mention these dwellings to hear a number of reminiscences of St. Robert, the hermit, whose memory is strongly preserved in the neighbourhood by means of the priory, chapels and cave associated with his name. St. Robert's cave faces the river in close proximity to the rock shelters just described, and is approached by a flight of narrow steps leading down from the pathway above. It is famous not only on account of its



KNARESBOROUGH

the first permanent dwellings of the primitive inhabitants of these islands. And how strange it seems at this day to find these ancient tenements still inhabited as they were two thousand or more years ago! Perched like eagles' nests on mere ledges of the great hillsides, and hewn out of the solid rock, these dwellings consist, as a rule, of merely two small apartments, the largest one being about ten feet square; and it is astonishing to find that in them the occupants still carry on spinning and weaving on a principle pretty much the

association with St. Robert, but also because of its connection with the murder by, and execution of, Eugene Aram, a tragedy immortalised by Lord Lytton in his masterly work on the subject, and by Tom Hood in one of his well-known poems. Almost in front of the cave are the remains of a small chapel hollowed from the solid rock, in which St. Robert bestowed his holy benedictions and fervent preaching upon peasants attracted to his cell by the simplicity of his life and the fame of his piety. The roof and altar of the chapel are beautifully adorned

with Gothic ornaments, while on one side of the entrance, under the shade of spreading ivy, is carved in stone the rude figure of a Knight Templar in the act of drawing his sword, symbolical, no doubt, of the defence of the Christian Church from the hands of the Infidel.

Knaresborough, too, is the happy possessor of what is believed to be the oldest chemist's shop in England. It is a conspicuous building on the east side of the Market Place, and to all appearances its massive oak framework remains as sound as at the time of its erection centuries long past. The cellar of the shop is of very dungeon-like aspect, being a single-arched vault possessing neither shelves nor tables and but one small recess in the wall where a lamp or candle might be placed. It is, in fact, believed that the greater part of the buildings in

the Market Place were at one time used as dungeons in connection with the Castle. Preserved on the premises are several interesting relics of early occupants, including some curious old shop bottles and mortars, as well as quaint "Pharmacopœias," "Dispensatories," "Herbals," and other books of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There are also in existence several deeds and documents relating to the property which date back to the year 1720.

With a holiday in modern Harrogate can therefore be blended many interesting tours amongst the ruins and relics of past ages, all of which have from time to time served to induce antiquaries and historians to adopt this northern health resort as their temporary place of abode. But to real admirers of Nature, who love to wander on moorland and by stream, to



DROPPING WELL, KNARESBOROUGH

pass a healthy, peaceful and pleasant holiday away from the tyranny of Fashion, and who desire not the waters and baths of the last-mentioned spa; to such as these Ilkley, "the metropolis of hydros," or Ben Rhydding, its neighbour, are far more delightful retreats.

Ilkley, though but a comparatively recent candidate for popular favour as a health resort, carries back its records to the Roman occupation of Britain. It is situated on sandy soil, on the southern slope of the valley of the Wharfe, while above it towers a lofty range of rocky,

and other places when the strong wintry winds from the northern hills are at their height, still there are many who appreciate the cold, invigorating air, and for these the great hydros especially cater by providing a variety of entertainments with which to while away the long, dark evenings. Almost all the hydropathic establishments can boast of large halls for dancing and dramatic purposes, and it is pretty well known that not a few people go there as much for the company and the fun as for the bracing air and charming scenery.



GENERAL VIEW OF ILKLEY FROM THE HILLS

healthy hills, called Rombald's Moor, from which gushes in never-failing force the spring of pure cold water for which the town is famed. It is considered eminently adapted for children of strumous habits, and invalids convalescing from acute and chronic disease, but, be this as it may, it is certainly the place for those who are addicted to good tailor-made tweeds and homespun in preference to satins and silks.

And the attractions of Ilkley are not confined to the summer season only. Although the majority of its visitors prefer the mild climate of Bournemouth

Near to Ilkley lie the famous Bolton Abbey and the picturesque Bolton Woods, which the art and skill of Landseer and the engraver have rendered familiar to many who may never have been in the neighbourhood. Bolton is to the toilers of Leeds, Bradford, and other northern towns what Hampstead Heath is to the Londoner; and a Yorkshireman who admits never having made this excursion is almost comparable to a Cockney acknowledging that he has not seen Hyde Park. For years past Bolton Woods have been regarded by the working classes in the northern and midland

parts of England as one of their favourite picnic grounds, and, certainly, they could not choose a better place, for by the courtesy of the Duke of Devonshire, the Abbey ruins, the grounds, and the extensive woods are placed at the free disposal of all comers.

Ben Rhydding, being only a mile from the centre of Ilkley, is generally recognised as part of that town. It has, however, a station of its own for the convenience of visitors, besides a number of distinctive features. Principal among these are the "Cow and Calf Rocks," which overlook the valley from a stretch of moorland towering in the background.

These rocks are known throughout Yorkshire on account of their grotesque aspect, and it is interesting to read the many names inscribed upon them by visitors during the past fifty years.

Oliver Cromwell, it is said, passed a night in a little cottage near Ben Rhydding station, but so numerous are the reminiscences of doubtful authenticity still afloat anent Cromwell in this part of England that considerable difficulty is experienced in extracting the real facts. Wherever you go you almost always find some one ready to assert that Cromwell or Dick Turpin preceded you.





WRITTEN BY ARTHUR H. HENDERSON
ILLUSTRATED BY J. SYDNEY ALDRIDGE

MASTER wanted for a 1,000-ton steamer. Immediate employment offered. Knowledge of China Seas indispensable. No investment necessary. Apply at once, with testimonials, to Messrs. Mavis, Gray and Co., Hong Kong."

The above advertisement used to appear with more or less regularity in the columns of the *China Mail* every three or four months. At first a single insertion appeared sufficient, but as time went on it might sometimes be noticed running for several consecutive numbers. After a while most of the regular Hongkong skippers grew to know to what ship it referred. Still, it must have been constantly answered by outsiders from other ships, or other traders. These, however, can never have retained their command for long, for the advertisement invariably re-appeared after an interval to announce that the "Lapwing" was again without a master. There was no doubt she was a most unpopular ship. Yet it was difficult to ascertain the cause. Most people, if asked, said they could not understand it. A few looked as if they could tell

something if they chose. No one seemed to have any definite knowledge—or if they had they kept it to themselves.

Now I have learnt the reason. Now I understand why the command of that vessel passed from man to man till the phrase, "skipper of the 'Lapwing,'" raised a smile on Hongkong lips. Now I know not only that it is a fact that every captain, save two, left that ship after the first round voyage in her—and of the two exceptions one was washed overboard in a typhoon, and the other committed suicide—but, also, I know the reason why!

Some months ago, Jack Forrester and I ran up against each other most unexpectedly in old Ambrose's Store at Hongkong—a noted gathering-place for officers of the merchant vessels trading to and from the port. We had been friends ever since we were boys, and, consequently, we hailed each other with genuine delight after the years that had elapsed since our last meeting. I was, by this time, first officer of one of the Indian mail boats then running between Hongkong and Calcutta, and he had recently been master of a China coaster

that plied mainly between Shanghai and the southern ports.

When the war broke out between China and Japan his owners promptly sold their vessel at a good price to the Japanese, and he lost his berth. Times were bad, and he had not yet succeeded in getting another ship—so he told me as we sat over our drinks at the rough store table. Then we talked of many things: of the happy days spent as cadets together in the dear old training ship on the Mersey; of apprentice days round the Horn in a 'Frisco wheat ship; of vessels that we had sailed in, and vessels that we had seen from afar; of Board of Trade examinations, and the long, weary struggle up the ladder of a sailor's profession. From that the conversation turned back again to homes in England, and I asked him if he was married.

"No," he answered, with a sudden flush on his bronzed face, "but I am engaged."

"My best congratulations, old fellow"—I was beginning conventionally, when he cut me short with abruptness.

"Her name is Jessie Collier, and she is governess in the family of an English merchant named Price at Shanghai," he said, in rather troubled tones. "And, of course, I think her the sweetest girl on earth, Frank. But in another three months the family are returning to England. Unless I can get a berth before then, and one, moreover, which will enable me to marry her and take her with me, she will have to go back with the Prices. The thought of it is worrying me badly."

Just at that moment, before I could reply, someone, quite by chance, flung down on the table beside us the current copy of the *China Mail*. Jack picked it up carelessly, and there was the advertisement about the "Lapwing" staring him straight in the face. He pounced on it eagerly with a quick exclamation. In five minutes he had departed unceremoniously, leaving me to cut the fatal slip out of the paper and speculate idly on its real meaning. I have that very cutting in my possession still.

Two hours later I met him again in the street. He was radiant with delight. He had gone direct from Ambrose's

Store to the office of Messrs. Mavis, Gray & Co., to apply for the post, and had obtained it on the spot.

It was in vain that I hinted, at first slightly, and then, after a while, more plainly, that he ought not to have been so precipitate. That the ship might not perhaps be a desirable one. That if it was the first-class berth that he declared it to be, it was at least peculiar there should have been such an evident absence of competition for it. Growing more explicit, I warned him that there were curious rumours afloat; that more than one skipper had left the "Lapwing" in the greatest hurry. That none had ever remained, so it was said, more than three months in her, and that although, strangely enough, the same did not apply to the crew, yet the high wages offered by Messrs. Mavis, Gray & Co., to the masters of their desirable 1,000-ton steamer, invariably proved of no use in retaining their services for any lengthy period. It was even whispered that the bad end of her first skipper—he who had committed suicide—had something to do with the aversion felt by his successors for their vessel.

But Jack Forrester scoffed at the idea, and ridiculed my indefinite warnings. He laughingly declared that it would take more than all the ghosts of all the skippers that had ever had her, to prevent his accepting the command of the "Lapwing" on the terms offered by the owners. Never, he averred, had such a stroke of luck turned up so opportunely. Mr. Mavis, the senior partner of the firm, had been so pleased with Jack's testimonials that the latter had ventured to ask him whether, after the first voyage, he might be allowed to take a wife with him. And the tall, courteous old owner, looking gravely at his new captain from under his bushy, grey eyebrows, had replied, after a momentary hesitation, that he thought there would be no objection—provided, of course, he remained in command when the time for the second voyage came.

Which highly significant proviso—as I thought it—Jack treated as merely the ordinary caution of a shipowner's business.

And, forthwith, we went off to have a



"TWO HOURS LATER I MET HIM AGAIN IN THE STREET. HE WAS RADIANT
WITH DELIGHT"

look at the steamer. She was lying abreast of the lower part of the town on the far side of the Fairway Channel, engaged in taking on board bunker coal from a large lighter alongside. Consequently, everything was plentifully besprinkled with coal dust. Her two pole masts were grimy in the extreme, and recent brine-whitened patches on her funnel were rapidly assuming a more sooty colour. Her iron decks, in places, were distinctly rusty. But she was not at all a bad ship of her kind. Built on the Tyne about five years earlier, she was a steel boat with triple expansion engines, and many modern improvements. One peculiarity of her construction was that all the berths for the officers and engineers, as well as their mess room and the steward's pantry, were amidships; the skipper's cabin and a tiny saloon being situated aft by themselves. This arrangement seemed to me rather unusual, and I drew Jack's attention to it.

"Oh—that does not matter," he answered promptly, "I always sleep in the chart room under the bridge at sea, so as to be available at once in case of necessity."

"You won't be able to do that aboard this 'ere ship, sir," commented the mate, who was showing his new skipper round. "There ain't no proper chart room so to speak. All the chart room we 'as is a bit of a table and some drawers at the back o' the wheel'ouse." And this fact was speedily confirmed on investigation.

"The cap'n allus 'as to sleep aft," continued the mate, who struck me as wishing to emphasise the fact. "Bit lonesome at times I'm thinkin." And the speaker blinked queerly in the sunlight.

Isaac Smerton, as the mate called himself, was a rough battered looking individual, one of those men who never rise above subordinate rank, but, sturdy and hardworking, are content with the lesser responsibilities of life. A splendid seaman in his uncouth way who had voyaged in almost every corner of the globe—from Mauritius to Honolulu, from Alaska to the Cape—he had, so he told us, come out with the "Lapwing" from England on her maiden trip, and remained in her ever since.

"Aye, she ain't such a bad boat," he opined slowly, "though not the sort o' craft as you'd make a yacht of. A bit too much given to rollin' when she ain't full that's what she is; and contrary-like she pulls strong on 'er 'elm when deep. But she don't seem to suit her skippers, them as lives down aft. Lord! what a 'eap I've 'ad over me. 'Bout full moon 'tis mostly as they gets uneasy too."

"Full moon!" exclaimed Jack in surprise. "Why what has that got to do with it?"

"Can't say, sir, I'm sure," answered the other shrugging his shoulders and looking his questioner straight between the eyes. "Never did rightly understand it myself. But 'tis a fact for all that. Maybe you'll find out before long sir," he added rather significantly.

"I wonder they have not given you the command," I remarked with some curiosity.

"Wouldn't 'ave it, sir," he replied promptly. "I knows a good berth when I gets it. I'm mate of this 'ere craft and I sleeps 'midships and I'm content like. Mr. Mavis 'e offers me the ship two year ago come next week. 'No thank ye, sir,' I says, 'mate I am and mate I'll stay.' But now I'll just be lookin' after them coolie thieves forrard by your leave, sir."

And, straightway, Mr. Smerton departed in some haste, while from the hubbub that shortly afterwards arose in the bows we judged his presence was not unneeded.

"What does the old fool mean, Jack?" I asked my companion as we went down into the little cabin aft to drink to a prosperous voyage from certain stores abandoned by the last skipper, who had departed—so unkind rumour alleged—without even the formality of getting a discharge.

"I don't know and I don't care," answered the "Lapwing's" new master curtly. Then his honest, sunburnt face flushed slightly as he added:

"I have got to make a home for Jessie in three months' time, you know. So I cannot afford to be too particular. Here is luck to us all three!" he said.

As I put down my glass, after drinking heartily to his toast, I swear that I distinctly heard a low mocking chuckle at

my side. I glanced sharply round the dusty little saloon in astonishment. Of course there was nothing there. I got up and walked to the door. Jack, apparently quite unconscious of it, was overhauling an empty locker. So far as I could see no one was near the companion ladder or by the cabin skylight overhead. Could it have been merely imagination? I suppose it was—and yet?

But my chum speedily cut short my wondering by declaring that he must return ashore to fetch his kit. The ship was to sail almost immediately. And so my visit to his vessel was at an end. And as I went overboard I felt a distinct reluctance to refer to that curious sound. So I didn't.

Both the "Lapwing" and my own ship cleared from Hongkong the same evening. We left just after her, and steaming rapidly seawards, passed her outside the entrance to the harbour. It was my watch, and as I paced the bridge I could see Jack's tall form standing by the binnacle on the other craft. We waved mutual farewells. For my part I thought he was a fool to go. There seemed to me an air of mystery about his ship that puzzled me and which I did not like. But then I had no Jessie Collier to consider. Perhaps, if that had been the case, my point of view would have been different. I have never married yet.

I was back again in Hongkong before many weeks had elapsed, and I enquired at once for the "Lapwing." But she was still away on some round voyage to the Philippines and Java, and there was no news of her. Then I was sent on an intermediate run to Rangoon, and it must have been a good two months later before I found myself opposite Jack Forrester again in a cosy corner of Ambrose's hospitable store. I was just in from Calcutta; he was off next morning for Labuan and the Straits Settlements.

He seemed unusually grave, and at first was very uncommunicative. But after a time he threw himself back in his seat lit a fresh pipe, and told me the whole yarn that follows quietly and thoughtfully. I think it was a relief to him to have some one to talk to about

it whom he could trust. As far as I can remember this is how it ran, more or less in his own words:—

"There is something uncanny, something horrible about that boat of mine, Frank, that baffles me. I never knew what fear was till I joined her, but I think I understand the feeling well enough now. Just about the full moon—as old Smerton hinted in our first interview, do you remember?—the evil things seem to have power to manifest themselves. Evil they certainly must be too! I used to laugh at stories of ghosts and spirits; I do it no longer, I can tell you.

"For some time after leaving Hongkong all went well. Once or twice I thought I heard curious sounds in the cabin for which I could not account; but as I was accustomed to have it all to myself, except when the steward was about at meal times, I put them down to fancy. The night before the moon was full we were steaming through Mindoro Strait on the way to Manila. The heat all day had been fearful, and the tropical evening had brought no respite, it was close and sultry. The sea was smooth save for a slight oily swell from the northward. A few ghostly gleams of phosphorus broke from the 'Lapwing's' bows as she made her way sluggishly against the set of the current. I had been on the bridge till we were safely past Apo reef, which divides the strait in two, and then shortly before eight-bells, midnight, I went aft to get some sleep. A strange feeling of depression had been creeping over me all day and by this time it had become almost insupportable. My cabin, as I dare say you recollect, has two doors, one in the passage and the other into the little saloon. On this occasion I made straight for my bunk without passing through the latter, and I was in the act of turning up the little swinging lamp when a sudden most unexpected noise made me pause in astonishment.

"Next moment it was repeated. A distinct burst of hoarse laughter rang out boisterously from the saloon itself.

"I confess I was startled. Who on earth could be there at this hour of the night. But then it occurred to me that



"AT THE TABLE WERE SEATED THREE STRANGE FORMS"

the steward must be making free with my whisky, and I flung open the door angrily, intent on giving that gentleman a lesson.

"The words died on my lips. *At the table were seated three strange forms.* The lamp was burning brightly, and shed a vivid light on them; every detail is burnt on my memory. One looked like a Chinaman of the lowest description, a sallow, round-faced specimen, with hideous triangular eyes and a degraded cringe in every movement. Opposite was what appeared to be a burly, red-headed man, in a dirty sailor-blue suit, *minus* a collar, smoking a black clay pipe upside down, the ashes from which strewed a long thick beard. This latter Appearance was wild and uncouth in the extreme; I can hardly describe the impression made on me in words. I can only think of it with a shudder.

"The third Shape was a woman's. It was sitting in my armchair at the head of the table, leaning carelessly backwards. It was the dress that struck me as so extraordinary, for every colour there is seemed to be blended in one hideous glare that made my eyes ache to look at it. It, or rather She, was busy sorting a pack of greasy cards, and her face was hidden behind them. Her hands were white and active.

"I never was so completely taken aback in my life. Everything looked solid and substantial, from the sailor's ragged cap on the floor to the black spirit bottles on the table. And yet the faces made me shiver. On all of them—for the woman was gazing straight at me now with piercing black eyes—was stamped the same fierce expression, the same reckless, abandoned look. One felt there was nothing, however wicked,

such people would not dare; no deed however cruel they might not attempt if it suited them.

"My entrance was greeted with a rude shout.

"'Here is a partner for you, Nell,' cried the man in a rasping voice. 'You two can take on Ah Fung and me. Whist, mate, that's the game!' And he motioned me imperiously to a seat opposite the woman.

"I suppose I must have taken it mechanically, for I found myself shuffling the cards like a man in a dream. They certainly seemed real enough. I can almost feel the touch of them still.

"The Shape opposite me gave a horrible little laugh.

"'The usual stakes?' demanded its woman's voice, shrilly.

"'Aye, that's it,' agreed the other; while the Chinaman rocked backwards and forwards, and peered at me with beady eyes. 'Look ye here, mister; you think you're master of this ship, I reckon. So did others afore ye. But that is where you are all mistaken. There is only one skipper aboard this craft, and that is Me! And I am going to have my way. This ship'—the Thing that was speaking thumped the table furiously till the bottles rang—'has got to be lost—to go to the bottom. Do you understand? May be you have a kind of objection to sinking her. So did some of the others in your shoes; and those are the lucky ones that shifted quietly, I can tell ye. But I'll make a sportsmanlike offer. We'll play for it. The ship's safety shall be the stake; that is a fair game, ain't it? If we wins the rubber, you sinks the ship. If you and Nell there'—with a ghastly leer—'beats us, then the old tub floats. See? Play up, Ah Fung, you son of a pig—your lead!'

"And he kicked his partner under the table till the creature screeched with anger.

"We played that awful game those three Shapes and I. I have the reputation of being rather good at whist. But I do not remember in the slightest how it went that night. All I know is that a sudden fiendish yell of triumph warned me that I had lost, And I became

aware of those horrible mocking faces glaring fixedly into mine.

"An indescribable feeling of terror seized me. I sprang to my feet, scattered the cards in all directions, and rushed madly on deck. Their last threatening chorus rang in my ears:

"'Lose the ship before We meet you at next full moon, or face Us again if you dare.'

"And its discordant echoes haunted me along the quiet decks, up the bridge ladder, and even while I stood beside the mate, looking mechanically into the glowing binnacle at the restless compass card.

"But I am not going to be scared away from the 'Lapwing.' Neither, of course, am I going to lose her if I can help it. Last full moon we were lying in Batavia harbour, and I confess I spent the nights ashore. But during the next one, in about ten days' time, we shall be at sea. Then I will face it out, and tell you the result when we meet again."

I begged him, with the utmost earnestness, not to be so rash. I urged, I argued, I entreated, and at last I cursed his obstinacy. Then only I learnt the reason of his determination.

"Jessie sails with me this voyage, Frank," he said slowly. "She knows all the story, and has made me promise to go and take her with me. We were married two days ago."

I stared at him in silent surprise, and after that I gave up my attempt to dissuade him. Moreover, when, later on, he introduced me to his young wife, I ceased to wonder. There was that in the girl's clear dark eyes, and sweet, rather wistful face, that made me in some degree realise how a man would risk everything for the sake of keeping her with him.

Besides, in this matter she herself was resolute. If such a girl had ever wished me to do anything for her, I should have done it unquestioning. Alas! none such ever has. And Jessie Forrester had heard her husband's story, and had declared that her place was to face the evil Things at his side, come what might. And she had made Jack, who loved her, reluctantly

acquiesce. Of what use, then, was argument of mine?

They sailed next morning at sunrise, and I watched them go with a dim foreboding, for which I could not account.

One evening, rather more than a week later, my own vessel was steaming rapidly southward towards Singapore. The night was fine, with a light breeze, the sea smooth, and the moon, approaching her full, was bathing everything in a wondrous glory of silver hue. Dinner was over, and the passengers aft were having a dance. It was my watch on deck, and as I paced the upper bridge the waltz music hummed dreamily in my ears. All that day a vague sense of approaching calamity had haunted me, mixed up in some strange fashion with thoughts of the "Lapwing" and her crew. Once that evening I could have sworn I heard Jack's voice calling me. Another time it was as if Jessie's low tones came across the rippling waters in a cry for help. Of course, it was all imagination. The heat in the daytime had been stifling, and I had not been able to get my due share of sleep.

But what was that glare away to the southward? Suddenly, interrupting the music and the laughter on the after deck, a hoarse shout broke from the man on the lookout forward:

"Strange light on the port bow, sir," his voice rang out ominously. Then a minute or two later, "Ship on fire ahead, sir!"

The dancing stopped abruptly. There was a general rush to the side rail. The captain joined me on the bridge, and ordered me to alter the course to bring us close up to the burning vessel. He rang up the engine room to "stand by."

The distance between us lessened rapidly. Soon we were able to distinguish the outline of a steamer lying motionless in the midst of a circle of flame-coloured sea. The fire was bursting out furiously, and mounting upwards till the very sky above was reddened with the glare. As we steamed nearer fresh volumes of flame and smoke could be seen breaking out along her decks, whilst we seemed almost to hear the

fierce crackling of the woodwork and the dull hissing of the flames.

But she appeared to be deserted. There were no signs of life on board.

"Can you make out her name?" said the chief to me, as the sharp "Ting Ting" of the telegraph carried his orders to the engine room to slow down.

I steadied my glass on the canvas wind screen of the bridge, and directed it on the bows of the doomed steamer. Long and earnestly I looked. Then a mist seemed to steal over my eyes as I spelt out the white letters one by one—

"L-A-P-W-I-N-G."

"I shall not go any nearer," said the chief decisively. "Take one of the boats and make sure there is no one on board," he ordered. And the throb of our propeller slowed away and then stopped.

The boat's crew gave way with a will, and we were soon as close to the burning vessel as I dared approach. As it was, the heat of the fire was almost unbearable. We hailed her again and again—no answer. Once indeed my shout seemed to linger curiously, as if it were caught up on board and repeated in derision. But I must have been mistaken. She was low in the water, and from where I stood I could see no living thing on her scorching decks. Her boats had been cleared from the davits and were gone.

I gave the order to return. As the men pulled round we went quite close under the "Lapwing's" stern. Tongues of flame were shooting out all round it and licking hungrily at the unburnt sides. And there, looking out of one of the cabin port holes, I saw a face.

A face such as no honest man should see! A face the likeness of which—please Heaven—I shall never gaze on again! Its weird fiery eyes glared at me with the sinister triumph of evil accomplished at last. A terrible grin played round its white mocking lips. A second only was it there, and then there remained but the darkness of an empty port hole, through which the smoke was creeping.

A deadly fear seized me. I shouted incoherently to the men to row for their lives, and fell back into the sternsheets like a man that is stunned.

From that day to this I have never



"BUT WHAT WAS THAT GLARE AWAY TO THE SOUTHWARD"

seen anyone connected with the illfated "Lapwing." When I reached Calcutta at the conclusion of the voyage, I was transferred on promotion to one of the European going liners. After a while I learnt that the crew of the lost vessel were reported to have taken to their own boats, and to have been picked up by a passing Dutchman previous to our arrival on the scene. From the same source I gathered that the origin of the fire, which was supposed to have commenced in the captain's cabin, was

wrapped in mystery. So far as I know it has never been explained. And though I have made every endeavour to trace my friends the Forresters, as yet my efforts have been in vain.

Now I am to go back to the East again to command a fine new steamer in the China Seas. Perhaps before long I shall grasp Jack's sturdy hand as of old and look into his wife's sweet face once more. Perhaps at last I shall hear the conclusion of the strange weird tale.

Who knows?





COMPTON PLACE

From Photo by R. J. HENNELL

Eastbourne and Its Vicinity

WRITTEN BY "GLENAVON." ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY
COLONEL MOORE AND R. J. HENNELL



ASTBOURNE is frequently spoken of as a growing place, and its inhabitants, more particularly the money-grabbing portion of them, seem mightily pleased that this erewhile primitive and peaceful seaside resort is yearly becoming more fashionable.

We live in an age of progress, and, alas! progress means the advent of machinery to take the place of more picturesque methods of locomotion and agriculture, the relentless march of the jerry-builder, and the disappearance of ancient landmarks—in a word, the destruction of Arcadia!

"One hundred years ago," I quote from an article which appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, September, 1897—"Eastbourne was a country village distant more than a mile from the sea-

side, with four little hamlets known respectively as Meads, Prentice Street, South, and Sea houses, whose inhabitants—simple folk—described a journey to Eastbourne proper as going up to town; did not know that their air was purer and richer in ozone than any other place in the United Kingdom, and would as soon have thought of risking their lives, by ascending in a balloon, as of endangering their health by bathing in the sea, or, indeed, in any other water."

And in what is, I believe, the earliest Eastbourne guide-book extant, which was published in 1799, and dedicated to Their Royal Highnesses Prince Edward and the Princesses Elizabeth and Sophia—a work which is now very scarce—we read "This village is small, but snugly situated, being almost surrounded by hills, and is built in form of a cross.

The church is an ancient edifice; the arms of Charles I. being hung up over one of the portals. There are but few good buildings, the principal ones are inhabited by Messrs. Willard, Gibbs, and Augur; the Custom and Parsonage houses, their gardens and pleasure grounds, which are uncommonly pleasant and shady, having fine elms, walnut, chestnut, and other large trees thereon, which, so near the sea, is seldom to be met with. . . . From Meads, which consists of a few scattered houses inhabited by farmers, a pleasant shady lane leads to Lord George Cavendish's house" (Compton Place).

To-day, not only have the four original divisions of Eastbourne become quite obscured by building operations, but two new residential quarters have sprung up, and are rapidly extending themselves, on the one hand towards Willingdon village, and on the other to the Downs. The sea front is nearly two miles in length, and thousands of pleasure-seekers are annually attracted to this healthy watering place, which bids fair to rival Brighton itself, in popularity and in size.

Visitors to Eastbourne are usually delighted with the gardens, the theatre, and the swimming baths, all of which

are named after "the Duke," as His Grace of Devonshire is generally spoken of hereabouts. A band discourses sweet music twice daily on the Parade, while "Mysterious Minstrels," the ubiquitous barrel organ, and the "raucous voice of the Salvationist," add each its quota to the babel of sound which we have learnt to associate with places of amusement—save the mark! in England. And many "intelligent tourists" when they have enjoyed all these things and have driven—by the Duke's drive—to Beachy Head, and have duly made excursions to Pevensey and Hurstmonceux, fondly imagine that they have exhausted the beauties of the neighbourhood, which, perhaps indeed they have, so far as their very limited ambitions and tastes dictate. But there are always the favoured few to whom nature whispers in the ear, and who do not confound fashion with pleasure—for the benefit of these then, let me endeavour to point out some places of interest in the vicinity of Eastbourne, besides mentioning what is best worth seeing in the town itself. And first a morning may well be devoted to the "old town," beginning with St. Mary's church. This, as the early guide-book so naïvely informs us, "is an ancient edifice," apparently because



FARNSDALE FARM

From Photo by R. J. HENNELL

"the arms of Charles I. are hung up over one of the portals!" As a matter of fact the chancel is of late Norman or Transitional work, having been built between 1150 and 1160; the nave (with the exception of the westernmost bay) is early English, completed before that style was thoroughly developed. The screen-work, the south door, and some of the windows are late Decorated, while the westernmost bay of nave, the tower, the sacristy, and some of the windows, together with the Easter sepulchre, the sedilia, and the recess over the altar, are Perpendicular. The font, too, is of this date, though Mr. St. John Hope—a

cross. It must be admitted that the tower is squat and ugly, but the venerable structure as a whole, when viewed from a little distance, is decidedly picturesque.

Immediately behind the church is one of those delightful "bits," whose loss the artist and the archæologist must mourn, spite of the fact that they are being gradually swept away by the ever-encroaching tide of progress. And Parsonage Farm is already doomed to destruction. It is supposed that it was formerly the habitation of a body of Black Friars, but it is now cut up into cottages, and the accompanying photo-



SPLASH POINT, EASTBOURNE

From Photo by COLONEL MOORE

great authority on such matters—is of opinion that it was copied in general form from an earlier Norman one. So that we have here all the Gothic styles represented in one building; indeed, St. Mary's is a very mine of wealth to the architectural student. The upper "molding" of the chancel arch is somewhat unusual, and appears to be of Saracenic character. The nave and chancel are not quite in a straight line, which has a curious effect, and is generally considered as symbolical of the Saviour's head inclined upon the

graph gives a very good idea of its present somewhat dilapidated condition. At the "Lamb Inn" may be seen (by permission of the landlord), a vaulted crypt of early English date, in an admirable state of preservation. In the High Street are still left a few stone doorways which belong to Tudor times, as may be seen by the moldings, which centuries have not quite succeeded in obliterating from the jambs and lintels. Two other Eastbourne churches, beside St. Mary's, are well worth visiting, as they are good

examples of modern ecclesiastical architecture, *i.e.*, St. Saviour's, a fine red-brick structure designed by Street, and "All Souls", built in the Italian style with a detached campanile.

Those who are fortunate enough to see a really high tide at Splash Point in stormy weather, are not likely to forget the grandeur of the immense waves which, rising like a solid wall against the sea walk, soon break into clouds of spray, and, anon, return to the beach, making an angry hissing sound as they drag the pebbles down into a seething cauldron of foam. Though baffled and defeated by the artificial barrier again and again, the waves often break right across the roadway and rush down a side street opposite, where the houses suffer considerable damage from the violence of the waters in "dirty weather." People sometimes dismiss the country round Eastbourne as "uninteresting;" the Downs they say are monotonous, and the Pevensey marshes wind-swept and desolate. And like most such superficial and obvious remarks, this has its substratum of truth. For the Downs can look very monotonous at times, especially in summer, when the white chalk cliffs and the dancing wavelets give back Father Sol's fierce rays in a glare of dazzling quivering light; when the sun-baked turf is brown and slippery as glass, and the curved outlines of the undulating hills is sharply silhouetted against an azure dome. No doubt, also, the "Pemsey Flats" are terribly bleak and cold beneath a sullen sky, and should a belated cyclist happen to be pedalling wearily homewards across this exposed part of the coast in the teeth of a sou'-westerly breeze, he will probably not "enthuse," at that particular moment, on the beauty of the level landscape spread out before him. The way to appreciate the South Downs properly is to ride over them.

"If your horse is well bred, and in blooming condition,

Well up to the country, and up to your weight,
Oh! now give the reins to your youthful ambition,

Sit down in the saddle, and keep his head straight."

Is not this the very poetry of motion?
and what grand views of sky and sea!

What a screaming and circling of sea-gulls! What draughts of invigorating air, as we gain the summit of Beachy Head, and give the gallant steed a "breather." And what a sense of space and freedom? "*and joie de vivre*," as we gallop onwards again over the smooth grass. Is not the pace exhilarating? Tell me *now* that the Downs are monotonous—if you dare!

And that stretch of marsh land between Eastbourne and Pevensey has, in common with all flat country, a peculiar charm of its own. In late spring, when the coarse grass is liberally sprinkled with golden buttercups, and the ditches yield their countless floral treasures to those who will risk a wetting in the search for them, the "flats" are positively fascinating to country-lovers. Yellow flag, flowering rush, feathery sedge grass, and quantities of water lilies are to be found each in its season, and all the year round the habits of our wild birds can well be studied on this lonely tract of land, which is a favourite haunt with many of the feathered tribe.

My space in this journal being limited, I can only speak of some half-dozen of the villages which are within easy distance of Eastbourne, and which should on no account be missed by a pilgrim in search of the beautiful who happens to be in this neighbourhood.

Alfriston (Alfrics' tun) is a typical South Down village, and it would be difficult to find throughout the length and breadth of England, a quainter or more interesting little place. Its fine cruciform church, which is dedicated to St. Andrew, is known as the Cathedral of the South Downs. An ancient hostelry "The Star," dates from the 16th century, and is said to have been frequented by pilgrims travelling to and from the shrine of St. Richard, at Chichester. There is a perhaps unique specimen of a pre-reformation Clergy house at Alfriston, and "its market cross still stands to mark the spot where Saxon ceorles sold their surplus produce." The artist will find plenty to detain him in this remote village, which has but slightly changed in appearance during the last three hundred years!

Wilmington boasts a venerable church, whose Norman walls are sheltered by an



GATEWAY, WILMINGTON PRIORY

From Photo by R. J. HENNELL.

immense yew-tree, which is probably eight hundred years old. Close to the church is a Priory, which dates from the 11th century; it is now used as a farmhouse, and there are but few remains of the original structure. The two towers, which form externally the most striking feature of the building, are considered to be of the time of Henry VI. But church and Priory and ancient yew are alike modern, as compared with the Wilmington Giant, whose grim presence dominates the peaceful village—a relic of a hard and perhaps hideous past. The “Long Man,” as he is locally called, is rudely cut in the turf of the hillside. In each hand he holds a staff, or, according to Mr. W. Burrell, a rake and a hoe, respectively. The outline having in the course of time become almost obliterated, the figure was re-marked with white bricks in 1873. It has been thought that the giant belongs to the time when human sacrifices were not infrequent. The Druids were wont to inclose men, women, children and animals in wicker cages (which were made in the form of men), and then the miserable victims were burnt, to appease the wrath of a terrible deity. These cages have gene-

rally been described as standing upright, but possibly they were enclosures on the ground, and should this latter theory be correct, then no doubt the “Long Man” of Wilmington was once the scene of unspeakable horrors connected with the cruellest of creeds.

Mayfield, which Coventry Patmore describes as “the sweetest village in Sussex,” should be visited by rail from Eastbourne. The curfew-bell still rings here at 8 p.m. from Michaelmas to Lady-Day. In the church, which is dedicated to St. Dunstan, may be seen some of the cast-iron monumental slabs which were common in Sussex at a time when its chief industry was the smelting of iron. Beyond the church is a Roman Catholic Nunnery and girls’ school, which occupies the site of Mayfield Palace, where the Archbishops of Canterbury are said to have had a country residence from the days of St. Dunstan till Cranmer exchanged it with King Henry VIII. for other estates. No part of the existing building dates beyond the 14th century. The Palace had fallen into a most dilapidated condition when, in 1863, the Duchess of Leeds purchased and restored it. The

work was carried out by Pugin in a manner which is beyond all praise. Wherever possible, the old material has been incorporated with the new—as, for example, in the chapel, where the Decorated arches which support the roof and some of the window tracery are original. A well-preserved and extremely beautiful specimen of a half-timbered house is to be seen in the village street; it bears date 1575, and is now the residence of Mrs. Tylor. The furniture has been tastefully chosen to harmonise with the oak-panelling and the latticed windows, and “Middle House,” as it is called, is an ideal country house, of which anyone might be proud—or envious! Four persons were burnt at Mayfield during the Marian persecutions, 1556, “joyfully yielding their lives for the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.” Hellingly, Chiddingly and Laughton can be visited in the same afternoon by an energetic cyclist. Laughton was formerly the residence of the Pelhams, whose badge, a buckle, may frequently be seen carved on churches and other buildings in this county.

From Hailsham, a country town of no particular interest, a pleasant walk will bring the tourist to Michelham Priory, a charmingly picturesque group of buildings now occupied by a farm. The gateway is shown in the accompanying photograph; this is, perhaps, the most remarkable feature of the place, but some early English carving at the back of the house must not escape notice. People are not, as a rule, allowed to go over the farmhouse, but such a treat is eagerly sought for, and occasionally enjoyed.

Hurstmonceux Castle may be visited from Hailsham station; this place is too well-known to need description here, but I may mention that a small factory of Sussex trug baskets in this village will repay a visit—being as it is a revival of a very ancient industry.

That this article—necessarily suggestive rather than exhaustive—may be the means of giving to some kindred spirit the same amount of pleasure as the rambles round Eastbourne that they have afforded to her is the writer's sincere wish.



GATEWAY, MITCHELHAM PRIORY

From Photo by R. J. HENNEL

"WHO STEALS MY PURSE STEALS—"



WRITTEN BY E. T. COLLIS.

ILLUSTRATED BY
SPENCER BLYTH

YOUR purse, 'sir, or I shall fire!"

Mr. Tumbledownditty turned himself round. He was on Clapham Common. It was night, and the weather was misty. Before him stood the figure of a man in a slouched cap, a long Inverness cape, and a menacing attitude. He was holding a pistol levelled at the head of Mr. Tumbledownditty.

"Are you a madman?" exclaimed the astonished Mr. T., painfully recollecting he had cashed his household beque that afternoon and had the money in his pocket.

"I am mad with want," answered the threatening stranger. "If I don't rob you I shall commit suicide. One crime is as good as another, so I may as well commit murder, unless," added he considerably, "you mean to give up your purse."

Mr. T. thought suicide was more commendable than murder, as only one person was concerned in the issue.

"Now, then," urged the stranger, "hurry up with that purse!"

"But, my dear friend," began Mr. T., in a tone of remonstrance—

"A moment ago you took me for a madman," surlily interrupted the robber.

"Well—er—you—er—know," stammered Tumbledownditty.

"Stick to the mad theory, please, for, when I've blown your brains out, I shall have a witness in my conscience that I did it while suffering from temporary aberration of intellect."

Mr. Tumbledownditty ceased to argue—he pulled out his purse and reluctantly surrendered it.

"Thanks," exclaimed the stranger, eagerly grabbing his booty. "Pretty full," he murmured, fingering its bulky sides approvingly. "And now, sir," he con-

tinued, still levelling his pistol, "I must trouble you to move on. Take my tip, do as I tell you, and—move on! Are you ready? Yes? Well, right turn—right-about-face—eyes straight. Now, sir—eyes straight—march—forward! Eyes straight—pistol in the rear—march—forward!" And Mr. Tumbledownditty marched forward, his eyes straight and his hair erect, until he felt certain he was beyond the range of that much-dreaded firearm.

* * * *

Late on a certain night, in a lonely room, a man sat at a table rifling a stolen purse. Twenty-five glittering sovereigns were spread out before him; but he still pressed and squeezed the purse as if he half suspected a bank-note might be concealed in its lining. At length, seeming



"HE STARTED A TERRIFIC HORNPIPE"

satisfied it was quite empty, and realising such an article would be evidence against him if by chance he was arrested he turned to the fire and held it up for throw into the flames. As he did so, a slip of paper fell out, flitted through the air, and dropped inside the fender.

"What's this?" cried the man, picking up the slip, which turned out to be a cutting from a newspaper. "Rather smeared, isn't it?" he queried, as he wheeled round to the candle and endeavoured to decipher the print. After some delay, and a few muttered curses he began to read slowly, word for word in an undertone, growing quite excited as he proceeded, until, all at once, he sprang to his feet and gave a wild exultant shout. The next instant he shooed off his boots and started a terrific hornpipe, nor ended before exhaustion set in and he dropped heavily into his chair. And the cause of this erratic display was the slip of paper which had flitted on to the hearth. Again, taking this in his hand, the man slowly read as follows:—

"If a person going by the name of Richard Carson, and grandson to the late Benjamin Carson, of Birmingham, will call upon John Bumpus, of 40, George Street, E.C., Solicitor, he will learn something to his advantage."

The stranger, who once more had danced violently and then fallen limply into his chair, and was none other than Mr. Tumbledownditty's assailant on Clapham Common, now took up the slip for the third time and scanned it critically. Then he burst into an uproarious laugh. "Learn something to his advantage," he gurgled, holding the print at arm's length. "Had I read this a few days from now—a few days after my little flutter on Clapham Common—I should have thought it smelt rather fishy. As it is——"

* * * *

It was quite by accident that Mr. Bumpus put in an

appearance at George Street on Saturday morning. As with many others, he treated it as an off-day, and loved it accordingly. He had hustled through his correspondence, and was on the point of leaving, when his clerk entered and said that a stranger, who refused his name, wished urgently to see him.

"Thomas!" exclaimed Bumpus, reproachfully, "you know my train will not wait while I see this man."

"I know, sir," said the clerk, "and I tried to put him off; but he was so persistent that——"

"Oh, well, let him come in," grumbled the solicitor, reseating himself, and preparing to snub the visitor into shortening the conference.

When the new client—as Mr. Bumpus hoped he might turn out to be—entered, the shrewd lawyer beheld a handsome man of good height and easy manners, who threw himself comfortably into a chair and beamed benevolently on the solicitor.

"I reserved my name, as I thought the mere mention of it would sufficiently explain my business," remarked the stranger, and then he paused.

This vague introductory was enough to send Mr. Bumpus in full retreat behind his spectacles. Thus entrenched, he regarded the new-comer with increasing curiosity.

"There is much virtue in a certificate of birth, is there not?" inquired the stranger, unfolding a paper he had taken from his pocket.

The solicitor conceived there was nothing more convincing, and he said so.

"Then I hand this document to you instead of presenting my card."

Whenever Mr. Bumpus was really astonished he always shot up his eyebrows; and in this instance his emotion was so profound that his eyebrows nearly fled into the roots of his hair.

"Are you Richard Carson?" he asked, at length, his eyebrows having, after repeated efforts, resumed their normal position.

"I am, and can prove it up to—er—my eyebrows."

"Well," said Bumpus, recapturing his own before they had had time to vanish, "you are a lucky man, for a large portion

of your grandfather's estate, to which you are now entitled, was not discovered at the time of his death; and the accumulations amount to—er—well—what do you think?"

"Oh," answered Carson, as cool as a cucumber, "I should say about as much again as half."

"A safe guess," smiled the solicitor. "They amount to fifty thousand pounds."

"And if my grandfather's lawyers had managed to find out this property at the right time, I should not be obtaining this pretty fortune?"

"Quite right—and what have you to say to it?"

"Well, for once, I can bless the lawyers."

Bumpus made a wry face, and murmured a little jest about ingratitude. Then both parties grew confidential, chatty, and cordial. The lawyer invaded a tin box, and took therefrom a vast bundle of papers, dating back endlessly. Next, he broke into his safe and purloined deeds and other muniments of title, which he displayed and expatiated upon with much professional satisfaction.

"And now we must lunch together," exclaimed Bumpus. "Excuse my washing my hands," he added apologetically, as he discarded his coat and hustled up to his mahogany washstand. "How is it I did not hear from you before?" he cried, as his face disappeared into a lovely lather formed by his hands. "I have been"—vigorously rinsing and interjecting a word between each dive into the basin—"advertising—for you—for—years—and—er——;" but here Mr. Bumpus was wrapped in silence in the folds of his towel.

"Oh," answered Carson, gulping down the truth and making a comical grimace, which Mr. Bumpus, emerging suddenly from his towel, nearly detected, "I don't often read columns of advertisements; but an old newspaper I had by me seemed, one night, to have a sort of fascination for me in this respect, and turning it over page by page, and reading almost every word, I came across your advertisement."

"How very singular," mused Bumpus, not realising that this statement was an invention suitable to the genius of a lawyer.

Then the solicitor carefully brushed his hair, not omitting his eyebrows, and flitted from the room to dictate a long letter to his clerk. Coming back, he found his client in a reverie.

"Shall we be going?" said the lawyer, putting on his hat.

"Right turn—right-about-face—eyes straight — march — forward — eyes straight!"

Mr. Bumpus seemed loth to obey these remarkable directions, and began speculating whether good fortune had not turned his client's brain.

"Upon my soul," cried Carson, laughing and blushing, "my mind was reverting to a curious circumstance that happened when I was a volunteer. I always forget myself when I think of it. As we go along I will tell you the story."

And Mr. Carson did!

* * * *

Mr. Tumbledownditty still recollected his extraordinary adventure on Clapham Common. On the night it happened he went home with his hat crushed, his coat torn, and several buttons wrenched off. Further, he bore visible signs of having tumbled down bodily into the mud. He described and reiterated to his alarmed family the desperate and single-handed struggle he had gone through with a pair of armed and determined robbers. Pointing to his hat, he assured the wife of his bosom that the butt-end of a revolver had driven in the crown; and, as his little darlings walked round and examined his clothes, he explained how, attacked in front and behind, his coat was dragged nearly off his back, and then, fiercely wrestling with his foes, he rolled into the mire, but finally beat off and vanquished his assailants.

Weeks passed, and Mr. Tumbledownditty was in the full swing of prosperity. He was a merchant in the City, and thrived with a vigour and persistency which defied competition. He had customers all over the world, and when one or the other from the United States came to England, he never failed to pay a visit to our hero. About this time a Yankee of consideration was sojourning in London, a wealthy and worthy man, who did not esteem it beneath his

dignity to love good wine and good stories. He was an old friend of Mr. Tumbledownditty, and the latter determined to regale him with the best of fare and the freshest of stories.

"Yes, indeed," cried Mr. Tumbledownditty, with immense animation, "it was miraculous how I escaped with a whole skin, and why one of those revolvers did not go off is a mystery. I expected death every moment, but I refused to surrender. They got nothing out of me, nothing at all—except the buttons of my coat. Why, I'll show you the very hat and coat I was wearing at the time!" And Mr. T., who was recounting his perilous adventure on Clapham Common, brought in and proudly exhibited his crushed chimney-pot and mutilated frock.

"Ah, Tumbledownditty," said his friend, "had I been in your place, I should have given the ruffians everything I had, and then, with a right-about-face, I'd have walked comfortably off."

"An Englishman, you know, is naturally pugnacious, and ——"

"Yes, but against two unscrupulous blackguards and a brace of revolvers ——"

Mr. T. blushed, and said something softly about the honour of England.

"It was magnificent, my dear T., but it was not—well, it was rash."

A thundering knock was at this instant heard at the street door, and soon afterwards a servant entered bearing a letter which she handed to her master. "The messenger said he wanted no answer," remarked the maid. Mr. T., with his guest's permission, opened the envelope and perused the following epistle:—

"To Thomas Tumbledownditty, Esq.

"Sir,—I beg to return you here—
"with the £25 which you were kind
"enough to hand to me on Clapham
"Common, during a misty night in
"November last. I also enclose a
"further £25 as bonus for your very
"generous loan. Your charity and
"good nature will ever be gratefully
"remembered by

"Yours faithfully,
"R.C."

Mr. Tumbledownditty did not explain to his worthy and wealthy friend from the States the sudden and peculiar changes which immediately overwhelmed and clouded his face. He was somewhat pensive and restrained for the rest of the evening. As well must it be confessed that he never disclosed to any one the source whence he derived a particular sum of £50, which was in no way connected with the affairs of his business.

* * * *

"Let us congratulate you upon the success of your case," cried honest Mr. Bumpus, as he heartily shook Richard Carson by the hand.

"Thanks—many thanks. I shall always remember my good fortune is due to the confounded carelessness of my grandfather's lawyers."

"Well, well," remarked Bumpus, chuckling and rubbing his hands, "I don't think a present-day lawyer would have given you the chance to remember him so kindly."

Mr. Carson smiled grimly and patted his solicitor on the shoulder.

"And what are you going to do now?" inquired Bumpus, "if it is not a rude question."

"Travel abroad for a few years, spend my income moderately, and accumulate experience."

"And experience makes money," sagely intimated the lawyer.

"In your business, decidedly."

"Then let my experience warn you never to omit in future to read advertisements in newspapers."

"Ah," remarked Carson with a start, "right turn—right-about-face—march—forward—eyes straight!"

* * * *

Mr. Tumbledownditty was five years older, and times had changed from a flourishing to a depressed condition. Trade was stagnant and money was scarce. Commercial courage was flagging, and the City full of evil omens.

Miss Tumbledownditty was the only daughter of our hero. She was handsome and accomplished, and the pet and comfort of her father, who, now a widower, was a little alone in the world,

his sons having gone abroad—to Africa, Malta, and Australia—to try their fortunes in new lands and cities.

"Papa," said his daughter to him, one day, "are you really in such difficulties in the City?"

"Yes, my darling, and bankruptcy will be my death."

"Oh, papa, papa, don't talk like that! It has not been your fault. How could you tell that the great house of Bel-daring would close their doors to their creditors? They have ruined you—you did not even speculate."

"Quite true, and that is where the cruelty comes in."

"Well, let us be brave and face it out. I'll never marry while you remain poor."

"Then, my dear child, you'll remain single till I die; for once a man of my years falls, it is seldom open to him to rise again."

"I feel sure there is still a chance. You may not be obliged to be bankrupt. Some piece of good fortune may step in to prevent it."

As Mr. Tumbledownditty wended his way up Fenchurch Street, he pondered deeply his daughter's words. He wondered what accident really could happen to avert the intervention in his affairs of the Official Receiver.

That morning a Mr. Drybones called on him—a financier and company promoter, an adventurer, indeed, in all the exploits of speculation. He had exhibited unusual regard for Mr. T. of late, and had more than once hinted there was a way out of his difficulties.

"Yes, you might escape from the financial disaster, Tumbledownditty; but, of course, it rests with yourself."

"How can that be? Would I not do anything in my power to avoid the shame? It is the humiliation, far more than loss of income, that makes my heart ache."

"Well, you see," said Drybones, who was elderly and ugly, but exceedingly vain, "I am a very wealthy man, and could settle one hundred thousand pounds on the woman who would be my wife. Now, I've been thinking that I should like to marry a woman who would be a credit to a fine mansion in the West End, who would attract

society, and—er—I—well—really—I've for some time past been considering whether your daughter——"

"My daughter is not for sale!" shouted Tumbledownditty.

"I would pay all your debts—twenty shillings in the pound—mind you—and I'd settle the sum I've named on her—in her own right—mind you—and I'd find you capital to set up again—mind you—and——"

"My daughter is not for sale, I tell you!"

Mr. D. and Mr. T. had a terrible fall

"What do you mean?" cried the discounter, growing pale.

"He will be in the Bankruptcy Court before the month is out."

"Will be where?" cried the other, in amazement.

"Where I've said," snarled Drybones.

"Then why do you want to buy his acceptances?"

"Because I want to ruin him—that's all. I may as well be frank."

"Then I'm not disposed to further that want."



"MY DAUGHTER IS NOT FOR SALE"

out, and Mr. D. made up his mind to ruin Mr. T.

* * * *

"I will buy all those bills which are accepted by Tumbledownditty at fifteen shillings in the pound," sniggered Drybones to a bill discounter.

"Why should I part with them? Is not Tumbledownditty solvent?"

"Yes, for a shilling in the pound," grinned Drybones.

"You're not, eh? Then lose every penny! I'm still a creditor of his for a good sum; but I wanted your bills to enable me to control the proceedings, after I have made him bankrupt. Good morning."

"Stop a minute," cried the bill discounter. "Of course, if—er—if—of course—you are determined—why—er——"

The acceptances were sold, and Drybones commenced to squeeze Tumble-

downditty. "I've got these bills of yours, and I can ruin you!" he roared, as he flourished the documents in the unhappy debtor's face. "Give me your daughter, or I'll—" and he turned yellow and looked awful.

"Never! Do your worst!" shouted the insulted and enraged father. "Get out of my office, or I'll kick you out!"

* * * *

"My dear," said Tumbledownditty to his daughter, "your aunt wishes you to pay her a visit. She is in Wales now—stopping at a boarding establishment. The old lady has always been fond of you, and——"

"But, papa, I want to remain here with you."

"Tut, tut, my love, you must not neglect your aunt for me. She is very old, and only has a small annuity, and so nobody can say we are kind to her because of any expectations we may foster."

"Of course, papa, nobody could say so; and besides, when you were rich, you always sent her plenty of good things."

"Exactly, my dear, and that is also a reason why you should go. You can let her understand, gently and by degrees, the real state of my affairs, and that in the future——" Mr. Tumbledownditty paused, having showed signs of huskiness.

In the end, Miss Tumbledownditty allowed herself to be persuaded to follow the wish of her father. She had considered her first duty was to remain with and soothe him in his troubles, but he overrode her scruples, and she left London for Wales accordingly.

"Ah, my dear," said Aunt Rachel, after she and Agnes, this being her niece's name, had been together for a week, "your papa was always very kind to me, and I don't think Providence will forsake him. Something, my dear, you may be sure, will turn up to succour him. He has had his trials—the loss of your mother and his youngest children, although the last, perhaps, was a blessing in disguise. The pony-chaise is ready, Agnes, so let us be going for our drive."

* * * *

A rather handsome man, of vigorous frame, and dressed in a tourist's suit, was travelling on foot at a brisk pace across country, not many miles from the boarding-house occupied by Aunt Rachel. He arrived at a point in his journey where occurred two pronglike divergences of the road he was following, and there was no sign-post to solve the doubts which now arose. His perplexity was assuming an acute aspect, for he was beginning to swear, when a pony-chaise with two ladies drove up. The rather handsome man lifted his cap and politely inquired for enlightenment, which, indeed, was easily conveyed, as the stranger was in search of the very boarding-house just mentioned. Then, by a strange coincidence, the parties promptly became acquaintances, and the pony-chaise, for the rest of the drive, dropped into a pace that accorded with the speed of Mr. Frank Porter's very energetic walking.

"Very strange," said Mr. Porter, looking hard at Agnes Tumbledownditty, "but there is something in your expression which reminds me of a face I have seen somewhere"—a not very extraordinary remark, but it went far to place the parties on good terms.

That evening Mr. Porter was very attentive to Agnes. The next day his attentions were resumed. The third and fourth days beheld them in a surprising aspect, they had developed into symptoms of worship. The fifth and sixth days found both lady and gentleman expecting something to happen. The seventh day he proposed.

"Ah, Frank," sighed Agnes, "I can never marry you. Papa is a poor man, and I have vowed to remain his comforter and housekeeper as long as he lives."

"But I can wait, only promise you will, and——"

"Papa was fifty-four last birthday, and he has a good constitution."

Frank looked decidedly glum. It might mean waiting until he himself was fifty-four.

"I would lend your father money. As I have told you, I am comparatively rich," and Porter looked passionately at the handsome, honest girl beside him.

"No, Frank, that would be no use.



"I WOULD LEND YOUR FATHER MONEY"

He is very heavily involved; he could not—nay, he would not—borrow money he could not possibly repay. He has explained all to me, and has determined to act like an honourable gentleman. I must remain true to him, and we two, the poor creatures of accident, must make up our minds to part."

"Well, Agnes," urged Frank, his voice almost breaking, "promise me that if your father can tide over his difficulties, and get again into comfortable circumstances, you will marry me."

"Yes, I promise you that."

And they shook hands on it, and more—they kissed.

* * * *

Mr. Tumbledownditty was now being ruthlessly dogged and worried by mis-

fortune. Things had reached a crisis, and a bankruptcy petition was hovering above his head. Drybones was the author of its being, and was maliciously bent upon driving Mr. T. into the sorest straits of insolvency. The unhappy debtor bowed his head resignedly, and prepared himself to yield to the inevitable.

There was a great and angry crowd at the meeting of creditors. The debtor had failed for forty thousand pounds, and the assets were exceedingly small; and the prospect of Tumbledownditty ever again being set on his business legs seemed exceedingly remote. Hardly a creditor was "secured," and rumours were afloat that the debtor had fallen under the fascination of speculation. But this was erroneous. His circumstances, through no personal default, had gone rapidly to the bad—the collapse of a famous financial house being the primary cause.

Drybones was the principal creditor, but he was very coldly regarded by his *confrères*. It had leaked out he was chief creditor by means of purchasing debts, and the members of the meeting suspected there was a sinister motive. The paraphernalia of the bankruptcy régime was duly observed. There was an impressive statement of affairs by the debtor, a long and eloquent recital of direful mischances and miscarriages in hard cash, which was presented to and believed and disbelieved by the assembly. Then various creditors rose and indulged in little acrimonious speeches; and, lastly, Drybones got up to deal the finishing coup. His game was to cross-examine the forlorn Tumbledownditty; but he missed his mark. The story of misfortune he thus elicited only served to excite the sympathy and respect of the creditors.

"I claim that the debtor be adjudged bankrupt," snarled Drybones.

Immediately a curious scene ensued. A fine-looking man rose in the body of the meeting. Every eye was turned towards him. He spoke for a few minutes, explaining he held a bill for a small amount. He then raised his voice and requested to be informed whether the creditors would accept a composition.

"Yes, eighteen-and-six in the pound," derisively answered Drybones.

"Will the creditors accept a composition of five shillings in the pound?" firmly demanded the stranger.

"We will," shouted the majority, "if it is properly guaranteed."

"Then I will guarantee it," answered the stranger.

"Who are you?" yelled Drybones.

"Order! Order!" loudly exclaimed the majority.

"Never mind who I am," quietly remarked the fine-looking man, stepping up to the Official Receiver, who was presiding. "The debts," said he, speaking more to the chairman than to the meeting, "are forty thousand pounds. A composition of five shillings in the pound means ten thousand pounds. Here are Bank of England notes for this amount, the best guarantee you can have. Now, gentlemen," said the stranger, facing the meeting with an air of prompt decision, "just you pass the necessary resolutions forthwith, or I shall pick up these notes and depart from this room, and neither you nor anybody here present will ever see my face or my money again."

The resolution was carried with acclamation. Tumbledownditty was saved from bankruptcy, and Drybones, who was sold to the tune of four thousand pounds by the bills he had purchased for his dastardly purpose, ground his teeth in impotent rage, and shook his fist furtively at the stranger.

* * * *

"My dear friend—for surely I may call you so—you will, at least, tell me who you are, and why you have been so good?" urged Mr. Tumbledownditty, the tears in his eyes, and his hand outstretched.

"Come and have a glass of wine," answered the stranger, taking Mr. T. by the arm, and leading him kindly away.

They went to a snug wine-bar, and a bottle of superb champagne was uncorked, cheese, biscuits, and cigars being also provided. They drank, and pledged each other, the elderly merchant feeling a great regard for the candid face before him.

"You remember a man stopping you, and presenting a pistol at your head on Clapham Common some years ago?"

"I do, indeed."

"I was the robber."

"You don't say so!"

"I do, though." And then Mr. Frank Porter, *alias* Richard Carson, explained how he had come into his fortune of fifty thousand pounds through the encounter, and was now a very wealthy man.

"I am delighted, I'm sure. But I was not the true origin of that little piece of paper that flitted from my purse to the floor."

"Who was, then?"

"Well, really, it was my daughter. She cut it out of the newspaper. The fact was," said Tumbledownditty, musingly stroking his chin, "we knew some Carsons in Lancashire, and Bumpus happened then to be our solicitor. My daughter, Agnes, gave me the slip, and asked me to call on Bumpus, and tell him all I knew of the Carsons in Lancashire. She thought it might furnish a clue. I regret to confess I put the slip in my purse, and forgot all about it."

When Tumbledownditty had finished this statement, he and Carson got their heads somehow very closely together, and a long and subdued conversation took place, in which the name of Agnes was repeatedly mentioned. Then the bottle of champagne was finished, and the two men looked supremely happy.

"I say," archly remarked Carson, "that pistol I held at your head was not loaded."

"Oh, you sad rogue! I wish to goodness it had been." And Mr. Tumbledownditty blushed deeply.

"Well, never mind," returned Carson. "The first time I met you, it was to threaten you with an unloaded pistol. I now meet you again to threaten you with a well-loaded purse. Health, my dear friend—good health!"

* * * *

"So you are not Frank Porter, but Richard Carson?" cried Agnes, blushing a lovely confusion.

"I am Dick," said the quondam Frank, bestowing a delightful embrace on his *fiancée*.

Yes, she was really a *fiancée*; the deed had been signed, sealed, and delivered, and in due time the charming Agnes was to yield up the name of Tumbledownditty.

"You have saved papa," murmured Agnes.

"You had first saved me," urged Dick.

"You mean a slip of newspaper did, eh?"

"And you mean Bank of England paper did, eh?"

And then they laughed, and almost cried, as proper lovers always should.

"And you never would have shot papa?"

"I never could have shot papa."

And then they laughed a little mischievously, but hid their merriment, or attributed it to something foreign or outlandish, as Mr. Tumbledownditty appeared to bestow his approval and blessing upon their betrothal.

* * * *

Agnes and Dick were married with much pomp and ceremony; and as the bridegroom was esteemed a wealthy man, a Canon of the Establishment was imported for the occasion. The noise it created gave a shock of surprise to the locality wherein our hero dwelt, and the reverberations thereof were extended abroad by the *Times* and other papers of sounding degrees. The happy pair left England for some months on

a tour round the world, and on their return they set up a home which, for comfort and culture, was the envy of everybody. As soon as a baby, a boy, appeared upon the scene, Agnes wanted him "Dick," but Dick wanted him "Frank." How the christening got on is not at present reported.

It is asserted that Mr. Drybones lost all relish for buying bills, and never afterwards attended a meeting of creditors, except by proxy. He entered a debit of four thousand pounds in his ledger against Mr. Tumbledownditty, and he continued to regard this as a serious asset to the very day of his death.

"When are you going to pay me that four thousand pounds?" he would ask our hero, whenever he met him in the City.

"My dear Drybones," the hero would answer, "you must hold a pistol at my head before I can consent to rob myself." And Mr. T. would pass smilingly on, leaving the old bill-buyer grinding his yellow teeth, and muttering sentences garnished with unenviable adjectives.

There is a firm in the City which is very respectable, very successful, and which operates in dynamite in the quietest possible manner. They do a large business; they aim at tall orders; they advertise in tiptop style; and they trade under the partnership name of Tumbledownditty, Carson & Co.

